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## JAPAN AND ITS ART

“This nation is the delight of my soul.”

*St Francis Xavier (16th cent.)*





HUNTING SINGING INSECTS. *By Suzuki Harunobu.*

# JAPAN AND ITS ART

BY

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LL. B.

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CHIVALIER SACRÉ TREASURE OF JAPAN

1897

THIRD EDITION

Revised and Enlarged

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LONDON

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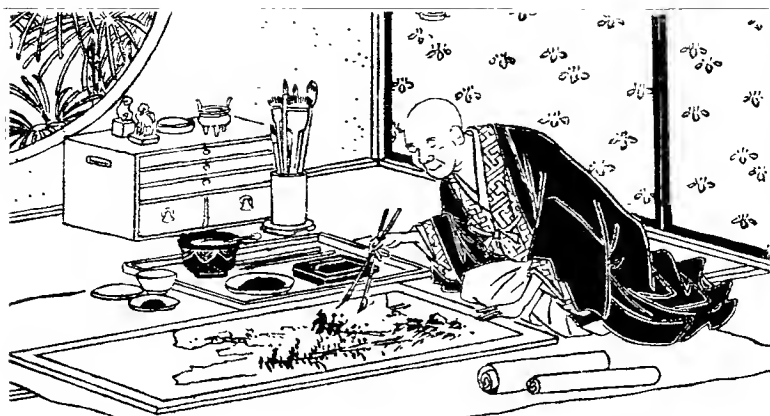
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No. 1.—A Master of the Old School. *After Hokusai.*

## PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION

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THE long interval, nearly twenty years, that has been allowed to elapse since the last edition of "Japan and its Art" was issued and exhausted, would seem to call for some explanation to a public that has for some time been asking for a further one.

The reasons for the delay are two.

First and foremost, the changes in Japan, in her manners, customs, and even her Arts. These have been so continuous, the old order giving place to the new with such rapidity, that it has seemed impossible to keep abreast of them in any record that might be prepared.

Secondly, the author's leisure has been taken up with other literary tasks, specially the Honorary Editorship of the Japan Society's *Transactions*, during over fourteen years, and the Editorship of the English edition of Count Okuma's "Fifty Years of New Japan."

But the recent break in the history of Japan, owing to the close of the Méiji era, and the commencement of that of Taishō, appears to present a convenient date up to which this record might be carried, and the opportunity has been taken advantage of.

This being the case, the third edition does not confine itself, as did the earlier ones, to the Art of the past, but carries it forward to the present time. This has necessitated an addition of eighty-five pages and seventy illustrations.

The author's sincere thanks are due to Mr H. L. Joly for reading the proof sheets, and thus ensuring their accuracy, and to Mr Charles Holme for his assistance in the chapter on Ceramics and allowing that storehouse of Art, the *Studio*, to be drawn upon for some of the illustrations.

COOMBE WOOD, DITCHLING,

*October 1912.*

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No. 2.—Helmet and Tachi. *Kōzuka by Chokuyetsu.*

# JAPAN AND ITS ART

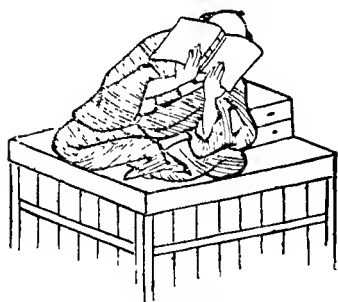
## PROLOGUE

1859

“There was in Yédo no scholar who taught English.”

1902

“A treaty of alliance, offensive and defensive, has been concluded between the two great Powers of the East and West, Japan and England.”

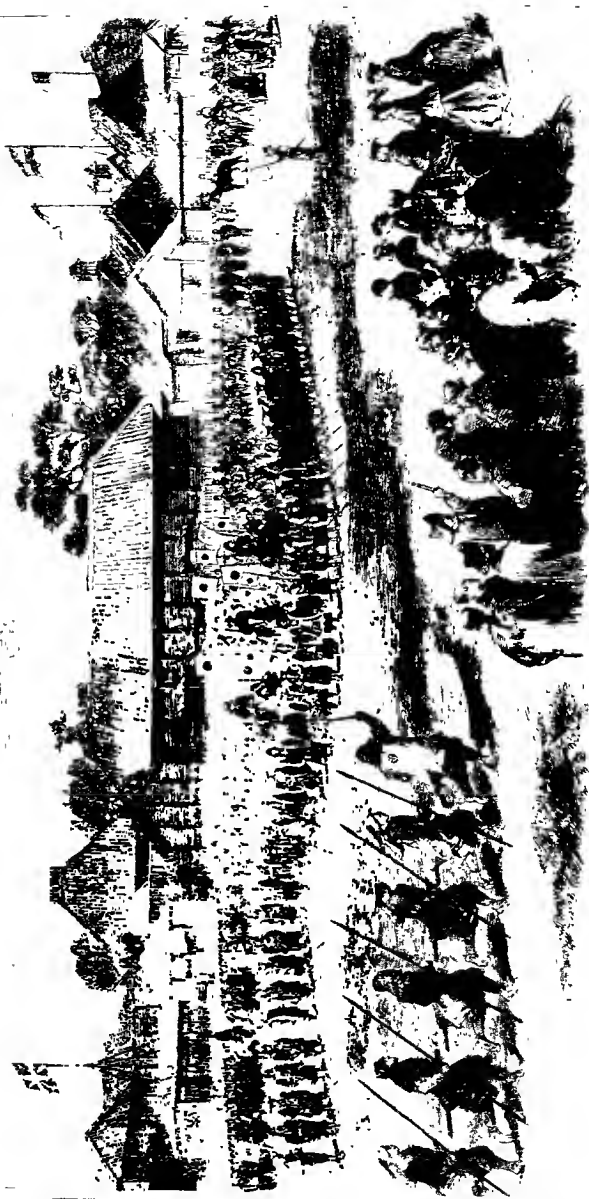


No. 3.—The New Edition. *After Hokusai.*

LESS than half a century separates the above significant facts in the life of the country concerning which this work has been penned.

It was in the first-named year that Yukichi Fukuzawa, one of the most remarkable men that young Japan has produced, endeavoured in vain to find in Tōkyō (then called Yédo) one of his countrymen conversant with the English language, concerning which even the Government officials were in such ignorance that it was customary for Ministers of Foreign Powers in communicating with the Shōgunate authorities to couch their official despatches in Dutch. Yet within a space of





No. 4.—Joint-Review of Japanese and British Troops, Oct. 1864 (p. 102).

years that in the life of nations must be termed insignificant Great Britain and Japan met on an equality to arrange an alliance which in itself constituted an admission that England's position in the East could only be rendered impregnable<sup>1</sup> by the co-operation of a navy whose total marine strength in the first-named year consisted of a ship of 100 horse-power.<sup>2</sup>

The little that was known about Japan at the first-named date by those best informed was instanced by our Minister Plenipotentiary to that country, Sir Rutherford Alcock, who, on his way thither in that year, gave it as his "tolerably distinct opinion" that it consisted of "a cluster of isles on the farthest verge of the horizon, apparently inhabited by a race grotesque and savage,"<sup>3</sup> and the Japanese on their side were warned to preserve a land sacred to the descendants of the gods from being defiled by barbarians who were the offspring of dogs, apes, and cats.<sup>4</sup>

How rapidly events have marched subsequently may be further instanced by the short period covered by the life of this volume. When it first appeared in 1888, I could plead as one reason for its compilation that so little importance was attached to Japan's place in the comity of nations that a geographical manual recently issued by one of the largest London publishers, devoted but sixteen lines to that empire, and contained almost as many blunders as there were lines. Now, amongst the most energetic of the learned Societies of Great Britain is the Japan Society for the Encouragement of the Study of the Japanese Language, Literature and History, Art, Science,

<sup>1</sup> "The best proof that has been given of the value of the Anglo-Japanese alliance is that even at a time like this in China when there is so much temptation to fish in troubled waters, there has been absolutely no danger of foreign complications."—BONAR LAW, *10th July* 1912.

<sup>2</sup> The "Kanrin Maru," bought for £25,000 from the Netherlands and which could only utilise steam power when entering or leaving port.

<sup>3</sup> "Capital of the Tycoon," Sir R. Alcock, vol. i. p. 4.

<sup>4</sup> Lord Redesdale, "Old and New Japan."



No. 5.—Fujisan from the West with Little Fuji (Hokisan). *From a Collotype by A. Ogawa.*

and Industry, as well the Social Life and Economic Condition of the Japanese People, a Society whose numbers amount to one thousand members, including some of the most notable names in Science, Literature, and Art.

Again, in contrast to the Japanese Government in 1859 having to call in the Dutch language as a means of communication with Western Powers, we may instance the Japanese Embassy to the Court of St James, where everyone, from its distinguished head to the latest arrival, speaks English with a proficiency that sets to shame the ignorance of the Japanese tongue displayed by those they are brought into contact with in the diplomatic world.

It may be assumed that this extraordinary advance in the relationships between the two countries will have dissipated the want that undoubtedly existed when this handbook first saw the light for a manual which would convey in a ready and concise form such information as the man in the street needs as to Japan and its Art. But such, I believe, is not the case. A plethora of treatises, *Transactions of the Japan Society*, articles in the press, have enabled a much more exact knowledge of the subject to be arrived at, but I am encouraged to think that there still exists a demand for a work planned as this is.

As in the first days of my taking up research into Japanese Art so now, there appears to be a place for a volume which gives in a concise and handy form the information it contains, namely, an idea of the physical aspect of Japan, its history, religion, people, and their mode of living, myths, and legends as illustrated in Art. Then, secondly, a treatise on its arts, especially those which we term "industrial": in the last edition these were practically confined to those of the past, but in the interval so much energy has been displayed in modernising them that I have felt that the scope of the work would be incomplete were I not to carry them up to the present time.

## PART I.—JAPAN

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### CHAPTER I

#### THE PHYSICAL ASPECT OF JAPAN

“Jishin, kwaji, kaminari, misoka, kikin, Yamai no naki, Kuni e yuku.” “Let us go to a land where there is neither earthquake, nor fire, nor lightning, nor any last day of the month, nor famine, nor sickness.”—*Japanese popular saying.*

JAPAN is known under various names, the majority of which are not so fanciful as they appear at first sight.

Chief amongst them is “The Empire of the Rising Sun,” that ruler of the universe being also adopted as the national arms, wherein it is portrayed a bright scarlet. No traveller to Japan is at a loss to understand the assumption of this title, for he will often see, during his residence there, the blood-red orb rising out of the Eastern ocean. Then there is Dai Nippon, or Nihon, a corruption (as is our “Japan”) of the Chinese Jih-pên, “the place the sun comes from,” an allusion to Japan’s geographical position as regards China; Kami-no-kuni,<sup>1</sup> or country of the Gods; Nichiiki, country of the sun, or “The Land of Sunlight”; Nito, nest of the sun; Akitsushima, the island of the dragon-fly, from its supposed resemblance to the form of that insect; Kunshikoku, “nation of gentle-

<sup>1</sup> *Kami* is the Japanese for all that is superior—a god, government, a noble, even the hair of the head (see “Fifty Years of New Japan,” p 5).

尺流女小町



No. 7.—A Lady with Maid and Boy in the Snow. From a Colour Print by Yetshi.

men"; and Yamato, "the great august country," the most ancient title, and one which is still used in poetry.

Any one who has paid the slightest attention to the representations of Japanese landscape, whether on metal, lacquer, or other material, will be aware that mountains form an important feature in it. In these they are usually placed one beyond another, with a profound contempt for the laws of perspective, and in many instances, notably in those that have a Chinese derivation, their forms are sufficiently repellent-looking to remind one of the back-grounds to the pictures of the Mantegnesque school. For much of this Japanese artists have abundant reason. Japan is essentially a mountainous country, its level ground not forming an eighth of its entire area; it is in fact nothing more than a ridge of volcanic rocks rising precipitously from an ocean of stupendous depth. Deep-sea soundings have stayed at 4,600 fathoms, or over five miles, and were two of Japan's highest mountains placed one upon another beneath its waters, they would fail to reach the surface by more than a mile. Even the cliffs on the sea-shore, owing to continued erosion from unnaturally swift currents, have usually a forbidding aspect; but in the mountains, owing to the decomposition that arises from rain, drought, and frost, the forms are usually rounded. Every remarkable peak is provided with a special god, in whose honour temples are built on the summit, and pilgrimages, which smack of picnics, are indulged in. Chief amongst them is one which meets with universal recognition from Japanese artists, namely, Fujisan,<sup>1</sup> or Fujiyama, as it is termed by foreigners. There is hardly a book upon Japan which does not open with rapturous words of delight evoked at the first view of the "matchless mountain." To those who have crossed the enormous ocean which separates the

<sup>1</sup> *San* as an affix is an honorific title implying a superior, or a person with an appearance. *Sama* in the upper classes and *Shi* in the lower as an addition denotes respect; but philologists in the case of Fujisan say that *san* is a corruption of the Chinese "Shan," *i.e.*, "mountain."

continents of Asia and America, the first sight of land after many days passed with nothing but an expanse of water to gaze upon, must be always pleasant; how much more so when it assumes, as in this case, a beautiful form. Griffis thus describes it: "Afar off, yet brought delusively near by the clear air, sits the queenly mountain in her robes of snow, already wearing the morning's crown of light, and her forehead gilded by the first ray of the yet unrisen sun; far out at sea, long before land is descried, and from a land area of thirteen provinces, the peerless cone is seen and loved." De Fonblanque writes in the same strain: "If there is one sentiment universal amongst all Japanese, it is a deep and earnest reverence for their sacred mountain. It is their ideal of the beautiful in nature, and they never tire of admiring, glorifying, and reproducing it. It is painted, embossed, carved, engraved, modelled on all their wares. The mass of the people regard it not only as the shrine of their dearest gods, but the certain panacea for their worst evils, from impending bankruptcy or cutaneous diseases, to unrequited love or ill-luck at play. It is annually visited by thousands and thousands of pilgrims."

This extinct volcano, rising from the plain to a height of 12,365 feet, almost isolated, of beautiful shape, usually snow-capped, and with clouds encircling it, lends an inexpressible solemnity to the view from whatever point it is seen. Hokusai, one of Japan's great artists, published a book in which he depicted it under a hundred different aspects.<sup>1</sup> The illustration on our cover is from this work. It represents its manifestation or sudden creation, B.C. 285. Of other renderings of it given here, one (No. 8) is taken from a sword-guard, attributed to Konkwan, a celebrated maker of Yédo (Iwamoto school, latter half of eighteenth century), and shows the poet Narihira unable to take his eyes from a contemplation of its beauties.<sup>2</sup> I believe there

<sup>1</sup> Translated by F. V. Dickins, with Japanese engravings.

<sup>2</sup> Narihira was a noble of the ninth century, renowned for his beauty and for his love for Ono-no-Komachi, an equally celebrated poetess (see p. 85). He is frequently depicted riding by her gate, playing the flute.



is not in English annals an example of a love for nature at so remote an epoch. Other illustrations from *koszuka* show



No. 8.—Narihira contemplating Fujisan.  
*From a Sword-Guard by Konkwan.*

in one (No. 51) Takoaka-mi-nokami, the dragon of rain, snow, and storms, emerging from its clouds, in another (No. 6) a peasant imagining himself strong enough to pull its top off.

Iwanaga Himé is the goddess of the mountain. He who dreams of Fuji, two falcons and three egg-plants, will have a long, happy, and prosperous life. Fuji,

snow, and the crane are the three perfections of whiteness.

Next to Fuji, Hieisan near Kyōto, Ibukiyama near Lake Biwa, Kirishima and Takachiho where the gods first set foot on earth, and where the "Heavenly sword" is still preserved, and Asamayama near Isé, from which is one of the grandest views in Japan, oftenest find a place in landscape art.

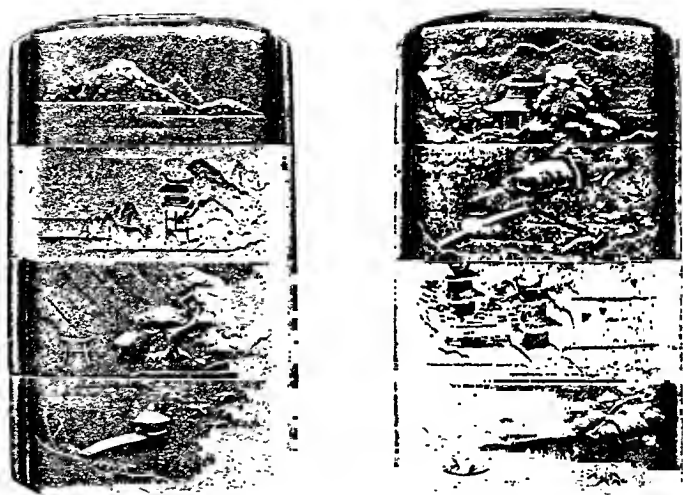
It results from this mountainous character and a plenteous rainfall that Japanese landscape does not lack for want of water, but the streams and rivers are small, narrow, and swift currented owing to their rapid fall; torrents in the wet, mere brooks in the dry season. They are, however, utilised in every possible way, especially for irrigation. The miniature lakes and waterfalls depicted in Japanese pictures are usually artificial.

Another remarkable feature in the conformation of the country is its extent of seaboard. Its coast is one continuous series of indentations, the sea being dotted with islands to the number of nearly four thousand. It is not therefore surprising to find that seascapes occupy a prominent place in Japanese Art. The dark colour which the artist often gives to his sea is not an exaggeration. The black current, or Japanese Gulf Stream (*Kuroshio*), which laves the greater part of the kingdom, is remarkable for its conspicuously dark blue hue when in sunshine, and the Japanese sailor being unable to distinguish between this colour and black has given to it the latter name. Besides the Inland Sea there is a large lake, named Ōmi, or Biwa Ko, from its fancied resemblance to a guitar, about the size of the lake of Geneva. Being situated in the neighbourhood of Kyōto, and in the midst of lovely scenery, it is frequently delineated in the works of the school of artists which has had for centuries its headquarters in that city. The districts which surround it have also much interest for the Japanese, as they were the cradle of its early national history. We give illustrations of the two sides of an iron medicine box, whereon are depicted the eight <sup>1</sup> beautiful sights (*hakkei*) of Ōmi : namely, The Autumn Moon from Ishiyama, Lingering Snow on Hirayama, The Blaze of Evening at Seta, The Evening Bell of Midera, Boats sailing back from Yabasé, A Bright Sky and Breeze at Awazu, Rain at Night at Karasaki, and Wild Geese alighting at Katata.

Waterfalls appear to have as great a fascination for Japanese as for Chinese artists, who delight in portraying,

<sup>1</sup> A love for numbers prevails in Japan as in China. There are the First Water, First Blossom and First Bird's Note of the year, First to meet the Foe, Three Imperial Insignia, and Three Great Views (*sankei*)—Ama-no-Hashidate, Miyajime, and Matsushima, the spray of prunus cut to three points, typifying Heaven, Earth, Humanity, the five essences without which man cannot live, Fire, Water, Air, Ether, Spirit, and the thrice-three-nine-times-Wine-cup in the wedding ceremony, the Four Heavenly Kings, the Five Festivals, the Six Views of Tamagawa, the Seven Herbs, the Six-and-thirty Poets

especially upon lacquer, the curves of the water and the delicacy of the spray, an additional reason being that many legends are woven round them (see p. 87). The country abounds with them, and several are noted for their size, which rivals that of the principal European ones; as a rule they are not recognisable when limned by the Japanese artist, but the probability is that the majority are taken from the neighbourhood of Nikko, the most picturesque part of Japan, concerning which there is a rhyming

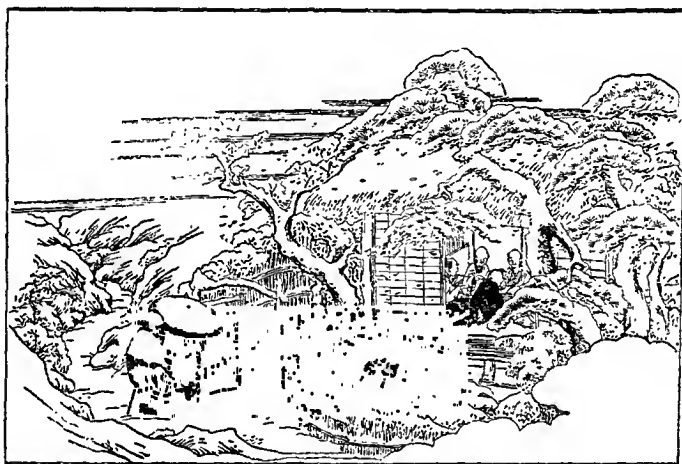


No. 9.—The Eight Beautiful Sights of Ōmi. *From a Metal Inro by Kuzui.*

proverb, "*Nikko wo minai, uchi wa kekkō to iu-na!*" "He who has not seen Nikko must not say kekkō," *i.e.*, magnificent, excellent.

When the climate of a country is marked by considerable variations, a delineation of these will probably find a place in its Art; and this is the case here. There are few things which occasion more surprise amongst people who look through any collection of Japanese pictures than those that represent the natives either floundering in the snow, or clad almost in Adam's garb owing to the heat.

Few foreigners imagine that Japan has any such extremes of temperature: a glance, however, at an isothermic chart of the world shows that the upper portion of the country lies within a temperature band which includes Iceland and Canada, and the lower within one which touches the upper portions of Africa. Its size is not sufficient to account for this; such an exceptional state of things is brought about by monsoons and an equatorial current. The clothing of the inhabitants evidences these variations, for whilst in summer hardly any clothing is worn by the



No. 10.—The Country in Winter. *After Hokusai.*

lower orders of either sex, in the winter thick but light garments padded with cotton wool are universal. Winter must be a trying time to the ill-fed peasant; his condition varies but little even now from what it did a thousand years ago, when the following lines were written:—

“The hamlet bosomed ’mid the hills,  
 Aye lovely is. In winter time,  
 The solitude with musing fills  
 My mind, for now the rigorous clime  
 Hath banished every herb and tree  
 And every human face from me.”

Our illustration (No. 10) shows a wayside inn in winter. Trees, roof, even the umbrellas, are thickly coated with snow. Within will be seen four persons comforting themselves with the feeble heat given out by the brazier (*hibachi*).

Much of the heavy rainfall is doubtless due to the large portion of the land that is occupied by forests. No less than twenty-two million *chō*,<sup>1</sup> or sixty per cent. of the extent of the whole empire, is taken up with them, ten million belonging to the Government and two million to the Crown. Their preservation is a matter of chief importance, for they bring in a considerable revenue, and it has been in a measure due to the erection of Buddhist temples, which have since the Middle Ages been placed amongst mountains noted for the beauty and grandeur of their wooded surroundings. Shrines were also placed in the forests to keep them sacred; others were appropriated as sanctuaries for deer and boar; and others could only be hewn as timber for shipping, an industry the importance of which may be gauged by the fact that there are still over 400,000 of the old style vessels engaged in the fisheries and employing nearly a million hands. The most useful trees are the cedar pine, chestnut, and a kind of oak, but the trees number some fifty different species (see Chap. IX.).

There are few effects which a Japanese artist is fonder of depicting than his countrymen struggling under the annoyances of rain, and bringing into requisition the paper umbrella which hardly seems fitted to such usage: who has not seen delineations of the young lady hastening to raise her sunshade (*amakasa*) in a sudden shower, or the warrior even on horseback fumbling with his capacious gingham, peasants hurrying along under their huge straw hats (*kasa*), or birds half hidden in the rain-storm? The sketch shown on p. 52 shows a convoy overtaken by a shower and covering up the baggage. An incident in the picture is noteworthy—the man using the pedestal of a wayside shrine as a foot-rest, a sly cut of Hokusai's at the

<sup>1</sup> *Chō* = 2.45 acres.



No. 11. — The Summer Storm. Three-Sheet Print by Yamano.

waning veneration for the deity. The reason for the frequent recurrence of subjects dealing with rain lies in the



No. 12.—A Typhoon After *Hirashige*.

fact that for several months in the year it is very much in evidence in Japan ; the spring and summer are almost

tropical in their wetness; the rainfall averages nearly 150 inches at Tōkyō, more than double that of Western Europe, and it all falls in two or three months, June (*samidare*, the rainy month) being especially wet and unhealthy. Accompanied, as it is, by a high temperature,



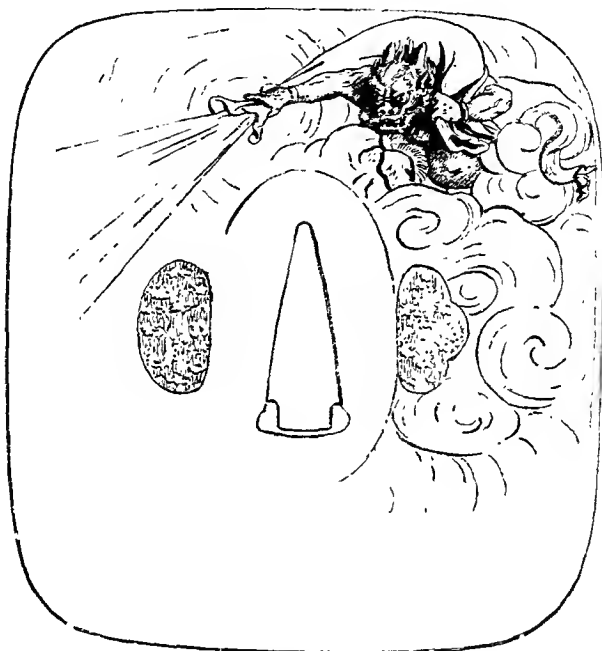
No. 13.—A Sudden Squall. *After Hokusai.*

it converts the country into a veritable vapour bath, inducing luxuriant vegetation, and making even tropical flora to flourish (see p. 140). The tendency of Japanese culture towards elegance and mildness has been assigned to it. Whether or no, its effects upon man are certainly



unpropitious, inducing in the weak extreme lassitude and early constitutional decay.<sup>1</sup>

If there is one thing more than another at which Japanese artists excel, it is in the portrayal of wind, whether it be the soft breeze just fluttering through the bamboo canes, or the furious typhoon raging through the trees and making everything succumb to its force. The inhabitants of this otherwise favoured country have indeed cause to hold in



No. 14.—The God of the Winds. *From a Tsuba.*

remembrance this mighty element, for in the autumn, especially in September, the dreaded typhoon sweeps across their country, devastating and carrying destruction as it goes. It is not wonderful that they ascribe a super-

<sup>1</sup> With such an abundance of rain it is somewhat surprising to find a rain-producing god (Ichimoku San) who takes the form of a one-eyed dragon, but famines in northern Japan due to drought show that his interference with nature is sometimes needed.

natural origin to it, or that the terrible god of the winds, Kazé-no-kami, or Futen, and his passage in anger over the face of their country, finds a frequent place in their Art. He is very frequently drawn as in No. 14, with a sack full of wind over his shoulders ; this he holds by the ends with both hands, letting some of the contents emerge through one or both of them. In a humorous *kakemono* I have seen him depicted as having broken his wind-bag and fallen into the sea, where he is being seized by a gigantic crab. Is he a shadow of the Greek God Aiolos who lent the winds in a sack to Odysseus ?

Earthquakes (*Jishin*) naturally are hardly capable of delineation, but their frequency (during some years the earth being hardly ever quiet) has had a marked and sensible effect upon the original architecture of the country. All houses were until recently built with a view to safety during these convulsions, being attached to no foundations, and resting on legs high enough to carry their floors above the torrential rains of summer, and the material of which they were constructed being usually wood of sufficiently light make to hurt no one upon whom it may fall. The Japanese ascribe earthquakes to a gigantic fish, *Namazu* or Catfish (see p. 77). The *Kanaméishi* rock at Kashima rests on its head, to keep it quiet, for in its anger it strikes the coast and thus makes the earth tremble. Others ascribe earthquakes to the *Jishin mushi* (earthquake insect), having a long scaly body, ten legs, spider's feet, and a dragon's head. The recurrence of earthquakes is so constant that in the newspapers of the day they are only noticed in this fashion : " An earthquake was felt in the capital on the 9th instant, at 4 h. 54 m. 16 s. P.M. The duration was 25 seconds, and the shock was a sharp one." After a dreadful shock in 1891 no less than 2,060 others were noted in the two following months.

The illustration (No. 16), taken from the important volume which Professors Milne and Burton produced upon that earthquake, shows the effect of these great seismic disturbances even upon the latest efforts of science. The

Nagara Bridge had been designed by an English engineer, and had for five years withstood floods that had devastated the surrounding country and typhoons that had overturned locomotives. It will be seen that the earthquake not only raised and sunk portions of the bridge, but removed parts of it either up or down the river bed.

Although the god of Thunder, *Kaminari-Sama* (the thunder lord), or *Raiden*, is very frequently met with in



No. 15.—Kaminari, God of Thunder. *From a Sword-Guard. (Authors' Collection.)*

Japanese Art, his visitations are neither frequent nor violent. He is usually depicted as in the illustration (No. 15) where he holds a drumstick similar to a dumb-bell, with which he beats the drum seen behind it, and whence proceeds the thunder. Lightning rays often play round his shoulders and also strike the drum.

As regards the aspect of the country, it is everywhere picturesque. Owing to its volcanic origin the soil is very productive. It has been described as "a veritable garden



No. 16.—The Nagara Gawa Railway Bridge after the Earthquake, 1891.

of flowers," which is easy of belief when one thinks of their representation upon almost every object (whether Art or otherwise) which emanates from the land. The flora are dealt with more particularly in a later chapter. I will merely here continue the quotation just begun: "All along the hedges, in the orchards, and about the villages, tufts of flowers and foliage of dazzling hue stand out against the dark tints of a background of pines, firs, cedars, cypresses, laurels, green oak, and bamboos." It may be imagined how delightful this scene must be when the autumn comes, and when after tropical rains the air is fresh and bracing, the sky a cloudless blue, the landscape coloured with the brightest tints, and the dust which prevailed earlier in the year has been washed away. The finest season is from the middle of October to the end of December.

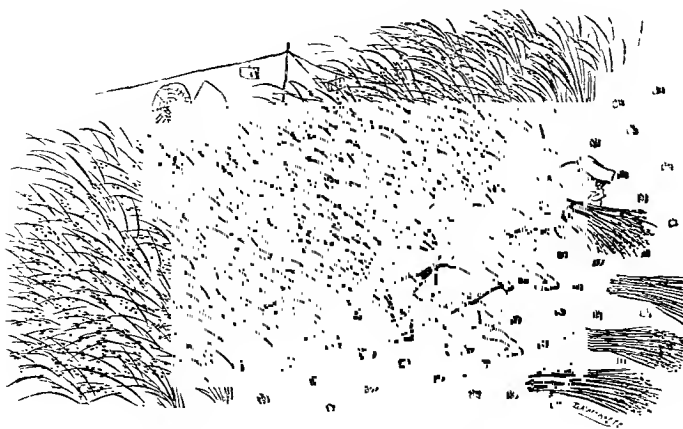
The country is everywhere intersected with good roads; one, the Tōkaidō, or "Road of the Eastern Sea," leading from Kyōto to Tōkyō, was one of the glories of Japan, and with its stations has over and over again been delineated by the Japanese artists upon Inros and other things; but railways and telegraph posts have altered the face of nature. All the great ways of the empire start, and all the distances are measured, from the Nihonbashi, or "Bridge of the Rising Sun," situated in the centre of Tōkyō, and a common object in pictures.<sup>1</sup>

The land is thoroughly cultivated, but always on a small scale. It is said that the field of the sluggard has no existence in Japan, but that it is tilled with a knife instead of a plough. Rice being the staple food and wealth of Japan, it abounds in the flats, and the plant is recognisable in pictures in its various stages of growth. It is first thickly sown in soil which, very heavily manured, is flooded nightly to a depth of two or three inches. This dries during the day under a hot sun, giving off a loathsome smell. The seedlings, which grow in about fifty days to the height of three inches, are of a most verdant green. They are then

<sup>1</sup> Distances are denoted by *chō* and *ri*, the former being one-fifteenth of a mile, and the latter 2.44 miles.

pulled up and transplanted in small tufts. During the whole period the people are busily engaged in the slush weeding and pulling up the mud in which it grows until it is ripe for reaping. It is then cut with a small sickle, and the sheaves are suspended across poles slung on forked sticks. Japan, in a ballad of the eighth century, is called the "Land of Waving Rice-fields." It is not only the principal edible,<sup>1</sup> but the national drink (*saké*) is brewed from it.

Had Japan been a country lacking in minerals, it is



No. 17.—Rice-cutting. After Hokusai.

probable that much of her finest Art would not have been produced, for the hermit-like policy which for so long possessed the nation would have effectually prevented her obtaining them from outside. But she has fortunately been bounteously dealt with in this respect. Gold and silver in workable quantities are found in many places. Copper is abundant, and of the purest kind. Lead, tin, antimony, and manganese abound. The finest quality of iron can be obtained from magnetic ores, but whilst the

<sup>1</sup> Millet and barley used to be the common food of the peasantry, with whom rice was a rare luxury, but it is now coming into much greater use. The ears of millet afford artists in metal an opportunity of showing some of their cleverest manifestations.

quality is high the quantity is at present unascertained. Gold for a long period had almost the same value as silver, hence the profusion with which it was used in articles of everyday use—a profusion which led to many of the finest Art pieces being melted down for the sake of their inlays and overlays. In numbers of the small pieces of metal-work which adorn the swords, we find gold silver, copper, iron, and steel, besides numerous alloys. The wealth of metal in the country has been deemed to be great from the fact that the great Buddha of Nara, known as the "*Daibutsu*," which is only one of many nearly as large, is made of bronze, the component parts of which include "500 lbs. of gold, 1,954 of mercury, 16,827 of tin, 986,080 of copper." It weighs about 480 tons, and is a worthy rival of the golden image which Nebuchadnezzar set up.

The population of Japan is now 46,732,000, an increase of six millions since my last edition appeared. The largest cities are Tōkyō which covers 100 square miles against London's 64, but it is in comparison a beautiful straggling village, Osaka, Kyōto, Nagoya, and Kanazawa.



No. 18.—A Calm Night—Futen Sleeps. *Kozuka by Takuheki.*



No. 19.—The Shikoro-biki Episode. *Kozuka by Yanyei-ken Yoshinaga.*

## CHAPTER II

### JAPAN'S PAST



No. 20 —Mask of Uzumé.

IT is surprising that the history of Japan, with its fascinating surroundings, has not been more utilised by Western writers, for since pen was first put to paper has there hardly been such a drama as that which was unfolded when communication with that country was first opened up.

To everybody's amazement Japan was found to be endowed with a dynasty supposed to extend backwards in unbroken line to centuries before our Christian era, with a history abounding in romance, and with an Art of such a fresh and novel character that the designers of every civilised nation at once rushed in to gather ideas from it.

This being so, it is, as I say, remarkable that in these days when the universal cry is, "Who shall show us some new thing?" authoritative books on Japan form such a small percentage of those of lighter vein that flood the market.

It has become the fashion with a certain section of "Young Japan" to affect a disregard for what is old, and in many quarters pride in the past is deemed a thing almost to be ashamed of. A similar phase is unfortunately affecting our own country, but it is one which assuredly must be ephemeral.



Fortunately few nations are so well informed as Japan concerning its history. This arises from its being one of



No. 21.—Anatérasu being enticed from the Cave by the dancing of Uzumé.

the principal subjects for instruction in schools, from artists having for centuries past derived a great part of their subjects from it, and from the stage being occupied almost

entirely with dramas concerned with the continuous roll of episodes of heroism and chivalry of the most fascinating character with which its course has been marked.

Brevity is my aim here as elsewhere, but this is hardly possible when it is necessary to go so far back as the Creation, and where the country's authentic history is as old as our own.

Upon no subject do opinions differ so much as to the origin of the Japanese race. In a paper read before the Japan Society in 1905 (*Trans.*, vol. vii. p. 142), Mr Takahashi assumed, but with no sense of assurance, from a study of the language, that they sprang from the Altai mountains, west of Turkistan. The generally received opinion traces their descent through the Chinese from the early Turanian inhabitants of Babylonia, who were Accadians, or highland shepherds. Their astronomy, language, and habits have all been recognised as similar, and there are striking resemblances in their persons, especially the slanting eye, black hair, and their short thickset frame, but anyway the present race is a fusion of many alien immigrants.

The Creation in Japan was, according to tradition, brought about in this wise. In the dim ages of the past there existed a Trinity who dwelt in space. Later came other deities (*Kami*), with separate existences, and after seven generations begotten from them, the Creation, which was confined to Japan, was decided on, and carried through in six stages, having some resemblance to those in the Jewish Pentateuch, the work being delegated to Izanagi and his sister, Izanami.<sup>1</sup> From them sprang certain terrestrial deities, amongst whom were Amaterasu, the beautiful goddess of the sun, Tsukuyomi, the goddess of the moon, Ebisu, god of the sea, Susanō (Godzu Tennō), god of the tides, and Kagutsuchi, god of fire.<sup>2</sup> A story which finds

<sup>1</sup> These and most other Japanese names vary in their spelling in every volume dealing with the subject.

<sup>2</sup> The last-named is, however, not worshipped, which is remarkable considering the frequency with which that element devastates the populous places. It is seldom that one takes up a Japanese newspaper without meeting with some such notice as this: "During the late fire, 1,095 houses and 222 godowns were destroyed."

frequent illustration in Japanese Art is that of the quarrel between Amatérasu and her brother, Susanō, and her consequent retirement to a cave, whence she was inveigled by the dancing<sup>1</sup> of a goddess named Okamé or Uzumé. It is narrated at length in Griffis's "Mikado's Empire" and Reed's "Japan," and as a child's book in "Yamata-no-Orochi,"<sup>2</sup> from which we take our illustration (No. 21). Masks of the fair dancer (No. 20) are to be found in every curio shop. The features of these are always similar, and have been handed down for centuries—a narrow forehead adorned with imperial spots of sable, puffed-out cheeks, dimpled chin, and laughing countenance. In her full-length figures she usually carries in her hands a bundle of reeds and a dart, bound round with herbs and little bells. Many ancient customs still exist which originated in this quarrel, notably the hanging of *gohei*, or branches adorned with strips of paper cut in notched fashion, in all Shinto places of worship,<sup>3</sup> across the entrance to the *miya* or shrine; and the cocks which now inhabit the precincts of the temple, and which were then used to attract Amatérasu's attention by crowing in concert. So too the

<sup>1</sup> Uzumé dancing is the first recorded instance of a pastime which is inherent in the life of the Japanese, and which having been taken into the service of religion has acquired a vogue unparalleled in any other country. It usually has a mimetic purpose, and almost invariably has had its origin in some historical event, myth, or superstition. The beauteous costumes of Old Japan owe much to the dance, which set no limits to their variety. The *Tanabata* and the *Miyako Odori* are among the few organised dances that still exist, but the geisha's performances when thoroughly understood and performed by a mistress of the art are unmatchable for grace and winsomeness.

<sup>2</sup> Kobunsha, Japanese Fairy Tale Series.

<sup>3</sup> These first took the form of offerings of hemp (*nusa*), a plant looked upon as one of the most precious productions of the soil, and presented as such to the gods. In modern times worthless paper has been substituted. *Gohei* are intended to attract the attention of the local deity to his abode.—Chamberlain's "Classical Poetry," p. 77. At a ceremony held in 1889, at the Great Shrine at Isé, the Emperor presented a golden *gohei* weighing 27 lbs.

sacred, burnished, circular mirror wherein the goddess beheld her likeness is the origin of the round metal mirror which Japanese women still use as their looking-glass, and also of the pastry in the form of disks used on New Year's Day. The two patches (*hohotsu*, or *bōbō*) on the forehead are still a part of Japanese ladies' costume where they replace the shaven eye-brows; and the dancing of Uzumé before the cavern is imitated in a pantomimic dance practised in Japanese villages. Another frequent subject for illustration is Susanō rescuing Inadahimé, by killing the eight-headed dragon after he had induced him to partake of saké set out in eight jars. This exploit has been depicted upon the bank-notes of the country. A sword which he found in the tail of the dragon is one of the three sacred emblems in the imperial regalia. We shall have occasion to refer to it later on, in the chapter on Legends (p. 82), as the herb queller (*Kusanagi*). Susanō was the father of Daikoku, one of the Gods of Good Fortune, of whom more anon.

The sun goddess is still the object of much veneration. Thousands of pilgrimages are made yearly to her temples in the province of Isé, and to those of Uké-mochi-no-Kami, or Toyouké-himé, the goddess of Plenteous Food, or of the Earth. The pilgrims are recognisable on their return by bundles of charms wrapped in oiled paper and suspended by a string from the neck.

From the issue of these and other divinities, the whole of Japan was overspread, the dynasty of the Mikado<sup>1</sup> being in direct descent from the goddess of the sun. The



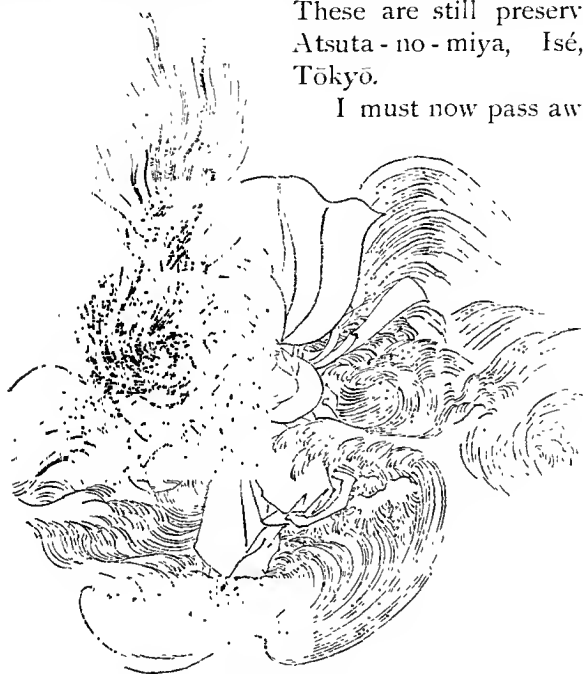
No. 22.—  
Kozuka showing  
Gohei.

<sup>1</sup> Mikado means "Sublime Gate." *Tenshi* is the official title, and answers to our "Majesty." The title "Mikado" is not now used by educated people in Japan, and is distasteful to them when used by foreigners, who should employ the term "Emperor."

Japanese era dates from Jimmu Tennō, the earliest of the Mikado respecting whom there is any probable data. He came to the throne B.C. 660. A scene in his life even now furnishes a subject for one of the national bank-notes. To the Mikado the goddess entrusted the three emblems of imperial power, the sacred mirror, sword, and seal (*Shin-shi*).

These are still preserved at  
 Atsuta - no - miya, Isé, and  
 Tōkyō.

I must now pass away for



No. 23. —Oto Tachibana leaping into the Sea.

a time from the mythology of Japan, which, as has been said, "is like that of Greece, full of beauty, pathos, poetic fancy, charming story, and valorous exploit. Similarly, it forms the soil of the national Art, whether expressed in bronze, porcelain, colours, poetry, song, picture, dance, pantomime, or romance. It is also the doctrinal basis of the ancient and indigenous religion."

Until the end of the third century of our era little was known with certainty of the history of Japan ;

the Mikado was, however, gradually assuming kingly rather than tribal sway, and under his rule feudalism was growing up.

Amongst the personages of this period (which may still be called legendary) who figure in Art is Yamato-daké, whose struggle with the giant Idzumo is an oft-told subject in Art. It was his wife, the lovely Oto Tachibana Himé, who died by leaping into the sea to appease the sea-god and to save her husband (No. 23). Yamato putting out the flames with the sword found by Susanō in the dragon's tail is told of at p. 82. A character which has been effigied again and again is the Empress Jingō, whose wonderful exploits are told at length by Griffis ("Mikado's Empire," p. 75). In the collection of pictures, images, and dolls which, on the 5th of May in every year, teach the children the deeds of national heroes, and instil into them laudable examples, the Empress is placed among the male warriors.

Another favourite subject with artists is a snowy-bearded man, Také-no-uchi, her minister (recognisable by wearing long court robes over a suit of armour, bear-skin shoes, a tiger-skin scabbard, and a noble's high peaked cap), carrying in his arms the infant Ōjin, son of the Empress, on the deck of a war galley; the child is usually depicted receiving the "tide jewels" from Kai-Riu-Ō, the dragon king of the world under the sea. Ōjin grew up to be a great warrior, and is even now worshipped as the patron of war. Numbers of shrines are dedicated to him under his



No. 24.—Hadesu killing the Tiger.  
*From an Ivory Manju.*

name of Hachiman, or "eight banners." The "tide jewels" are used frequently in ornamental art, and adorn the paper currency of the empire. Hachiman is usually depicted with a scowling countenance, holding a broad two-edged sword. Hadésu, ambassador to Corea, A.D. 545, killing the tiger which had destroyed his daughter (No. 24), is also a subject for artists.

The interval between the third and twelfth centuries was specially notable for the introduction of Chinese writing, the philosophies of Confucius and Buddha, and the Arts through workers in metals and stuffs from Corea. Prior to our Norman Conquest civilisation had advanced to such an extent, that music, astronomy, philosophy, mathematics, and medicine all possessed fully organised colleges. Towards the close of this period the Mikado retired from public life owing to the rise of noble families, who usurped his power, obtained possession of all civil and military offices, and rendered him inaccessible to his people.

The first of these families to come to the front was the Fujiwara, in the seventh century. It still holds the foremost place among the nobility of Japan, two-thirds of the noble families being of that name and descent.

It was not likely that the reins of power would be allowed to remain uncontested in the hands of any individual or clan, and the Taira,<sup>1</sup> the Genji or Minamoto and Hōjō families, in the centuries to come, strove for and, in succession, secured the pride of place.

Their struggles fill the pages of Japanese history for nearly five centuries. Many exploits during that period find exposition in Art: for instance, Kiyomori, a Taira, who long terrorised Japan, and subdued the Sugawara and Minamoto, only to suffer defeat in turn at their hands; Yoshitomo, a Minamoto, his rival, who was treacherously murdered; the flight of Yoshitomo's beautiful concubine, Tokiwa (usually depicted toiling through the

<sup>1</sup> The "Historic Romance of the Taira," Heiké Monogatari, is one of the most popular Japanese works of fiction.

snow with a baby at her breast, and two children, one carrying his father's sword, at her side): this baby was Yoshitsuné, who, born in 1159, lived to be the "Bayard



No. 25.—Benkei and Yoshitsuné fighting on Gōjō Bridge. *From a Kōzuka.*

of Japan," and to earn by his prowess the most famous name in the nation's history. His elder brother, Yoritomo (but by another mother, also grew up to be a great general, and ruler of all Japan. The adventures of the two are illustrated again and again in Art: for instance, Yoritomo secreting himself in a hollow tree after his defeat at Ishibashiyama; Yoshitsuné learning to fence from the Tengu; his fight with Benkei on Gōjō Bridge (No. 25), when to the astonishment of Benkei he leaps so far into the air above the bridge as to be almost invisible.<sup>1</sup> No collection can be looked over without coming across episodes in the life of the two last-named, who, after their combat, became inseparable friends.

After numerous defeats, the brothers Yoritomo and



No. 26.—Takatsuna at the Battle of Ujigawa. *From a Kōzuka.*

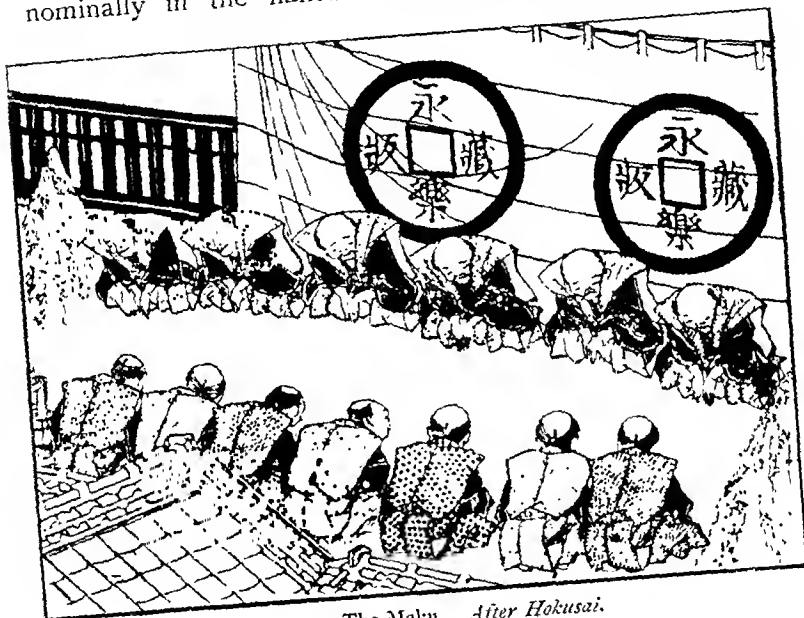
Yoshitsuné were victorious over Kiyomori, who saved himself by his death in 1181 from seeing his family dragged from power. Four years later, in a naval contest, the

<sup>1</sup> These and other illustrations are purposely taken from small objects, so that as many as possible may be given.



Taira were utterly defeated, and every effort was made by sea and land to exterminate them.

We must dwell a little longer upon this period, for then it was that the dual government, which has puzzled so many writers on Japan, became an actuality. Yoritomo after his success founded a city at Kamakura, on the bay of Tōkyō, which became the capital in turn of the Minamoto and Hōjō. Whilst leaving the government nominally in the hands of the Mikado at Kyōto, he



No. 27.—The Maku. After Hokusai.

assumed the reins of power at Kamakura, and established a military government, which lasted until 1868. It was called *bakufu*, or curtain government, because of the curtain (*maku*) (see No. 27) which surrounded the commander's tent. He was the first Shōgun.<sup>1</sup> His fame is tarnished by his treatment of his brother

<sup>1</sup> This appointment, Sei-i Tai Shōgun (Barbarian-subjugating Great General), was the highest honour conferred by the Mikado. It was, until 1868, appropriated in succession by various families.

Yoshitsuné, of whom he was jealous, and whom he is said to have put to death at the age of thirty. Of the city of Kamakura nothing now remains but a seaside village, a health resort for Yokohama, a few temples surrounded by groves of magnificent ichō trees, and the great Daibutsu, where once a million people dwelt. It may be said of it as was once of Kyōto, "The capital is like an evening lark. It rose with song, it descended among tears."

A division of the people into civil and military classes about this period had a most unfortunate effect upon the future of the country; the former, which may be termed the agricultural element, and comprised the larger portion of the population, continued for centuries in the same



No. 28.—Nitta Yoshisada throwing his Sword into the Sea.  
*From a Pouch Ornament.*

condition of semi-civilisation; the latter became a clan which until the present era occupied the entire field of arms, learning, and intellect. Under their title of *Samurai* we shall deal with them at length in the chapter on Society in Japan.

Griffis in his account of this period points to a proverb of Chinese origin, "There is no seed to a great man," as being exemplified over and over again in the history of Japan. It occurred in this instance. Yoritomo's descendants had no stamina, and soon became the puppets of the Hōjō family, who for a century and a half tyrannised over the country and sucked its life. They even banished

the Mikado. Two episodes from this period, illustrated here, are favourites with artists, and are to be found on the national bank-notes: Kojima Takanori, a faithful adherent of the Mikado Godaigo Tenno, writing on a cherry-tree which his captive lord was to pass, a stanza bidding him live in hope; the other, which I believe to be Nitta Yoshisada, casting his sword into the sea as a prayer-offering to the gods, for the waves to recede and permit his army to cross, in order to engage the Hōjō (No. 28). The battle which followed resulted in the overthrow of the usurper's power and the restoration of the Mikado, A.D.



No. 29.—Kojima writing on the Cherry Tree. *From a Kashira.*

1333.

Merit did not, however, meet with its reward, for Nitta and Kusunoki Masashigé—the latter one of the noblest names in Japanese history—found themselves supplanted by Ashikaga Takauji, a consummate villain, who embroiled all parties, gave Japan a “War of the Roses,” tilled the soil for feudalism, and abandoned the land for two centuries and a half to slaughter, ignorance, and paralysis of national progress. He did not assume the Shōgunate himself, but he set up a rival Mikado, and in 1336 a conflict commenced between the northern and southern dynasties which lasted for fifty-six years. He himself died in 1356, but his family ruled as Shōguns till 1573.

The precincts of the courts at Kyōto and Kamakura were naturally the quarters where artists mainly practised, but the very causes which were at work to keep these as centres resulted in a spread of Art knowledge. A Daimyō, who, in order that he might be under observation, was compelled to spend six months of the year at Court, naturally imitated in his distant home the fashion of the capital, and would probably take back in his train painters, workers in metal, lacquer, etc., who could adorn for him his arms or his fortress. Such artists, working with the sole idea of doing their best to please their lord, in want

for nothing, having ample time at disposal, and full of natural ability, were bound to produce results having originality and individuality; and this would be even more noticeable in the products of succeeding generations, when the skill had become hereditary, and each worker was the possessor of the secrets and methods of his ancestors. Although during the long period to which I have referred war was the rule and peace the exception, the arts made continuous and steady progress. Naturally, at a time when education was neglected and every one carried his life in his hand, it could only be here and there that this occurred. But warfare itself stimulated certain professions—such as the manufacture and adornment of arms and armour. When the owner's life depended upon the trustworthiness of his blade, every effort was made to render it as perfect as possible; so we find the sword-makers attaining to a proficiency which has never been excelled by any other nation. The religious houses, save and except during the persecutions of Nobunaga, afforded a retreat where the arts could be followed in peace and quietness, though their inmates were ready to arm themselves and fight whenever occasion required. The service and adornments of the temple called for paintings on silk (*kakemono*), sculptures, bronzes, altar furniture, lacquer, and goldsmiths' work.

The notables of the Ashikaga family who find a place in Art were Yoshimitsu (1368-1394) and Yoshimasa (1449-1471), who introduced the political reunions, still kept up under the name of *Chanoyu* (p. 122). Both were artists themselves, and the latter encouraged painting and lacquer work. His reign was, from an Art standpoint, perhaps the most brilliant in history.

It was near the close of the Ashikaga rule, probably in 1542, that Japan was discovered by Europeans, Fernando Mendez Pinto, the Portuguese, driven thither by storms, in a Chinese junk, landing in Kiushiu. His companion Zaimoto taught the Japanese to make gunpowder and

firearms. Japan was not then antagonistic to the foreign element, which with its religion was welcomed, the earliest missionaries being Portuguese. The Dutch were the first to recognise this opening for commerce, and for nearly two centuries they practically monopolised it, although the English established a factory in Japan in the first quarter of the seventeenth century.

What may be termed the modern period came in with Oda Nobunaga, a Taira, whose military dictatorship bridged over the interval between the expiring power of the Ashikaga and the strong government of the Tokugawa. He and Toyotomi Hidéyoshi, better known as Taikō ("great house"), paved the way for the constitutional rule of the Tokugawa.

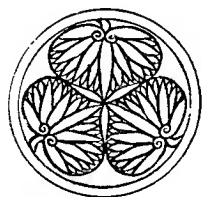
Nobunaga came to the front about 1542, taking the side of Ashikaga Yoshiaki until he quarrelled with him in 1566, deposed him, and brought to an end the rule of his family, which had lasted over a span of two hundred and fifty years.

Hidéyoshi, who followed Nobunaga, was a man of almost unique personality. "No one can raise his hand against me," he said, "for there cannot be another like myself." He solidified the empire, encouraged military enterprise and intellectual, commercial, and artistic activity. He especially fostered architecture (building the beautiful palace of Momoyama at Fushimi) and the Ceramic industry. "Raku" ware takes its name from the Chinese character, signifying "happiness" or "enjoyment," which was upon his seal, he having given Tanaka Chojiro, the potter, permission to use it. In every branch of Art artists whose work has never been excelled were to the front.

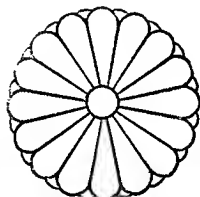
We now arrive at one who stood foremost among men, who was a legislator as well as a warrior, who could win a victory and garner the fruits of it, and who, it is said, could amuse himself well, study well, fight and govern well. This was Tokugawa Iyéyasu, the hero of Sékigahara, the most decisive battle in Japanese history, the creator of the perfected dual system of government and of feudalism, and the founder

of the city of Yédo.<sup>1</sup> After the death of Hidéyoshi, differences arising amongst the governors of the provinces as well as jealousy of himself, he encountered and defeated them and their army, 180,000 strong, in the battle just named. The result was the accession of his (the Tokugawa) family to power, the hereditary possession of the Shōgunate, and the isolation of Japan from all the world during a period of two hundred and sixty-eight years. Yédo became in effect the capital, and thither most of the artists of fame migrated: peace lasted for two centuries. Iyéyasu was made Shōgun in 1603. The title Taikun (Ty-coon, or Great Prince) was assumed only by the last three Tokugawa Shōguns.

Wares made for, or under the patronage of, the Tokugawa family may be recognised by their bearing the



No. 30.—Mitsuaoi Badge  
of Tokugawa Family.



No. 31.—Imperial Badge  
of Japan.

family badge (Nos. 30 and 33), three *futsuba-aoi* leaves: two-leaved wild ginger): it is said to have been adopted by Iyéyasu from being served with a meal on these leaves as a plate by one of his vassals, their points meeting in the centre of a circle. Those made for the Emperor have the *kirimon*, three leaves and flowers of the *Paulownia imperialis* (No. 32). The family or court badge is distinguished by the flowers having five and three, instead of seven and five buds No. 32. The imperial badge of Japan No. 31 is a very conventional rendering of a sixteen-petalled

<sup>1</sup> The name Yédo was changed to Tōkyō, "Eastern capital," upon the abolition of the Shōgunate, in 1868, when the Emperor as he is now styled made it his capital in place of Kyōto, which was also renamed Sai-kyō, or "Western capital."

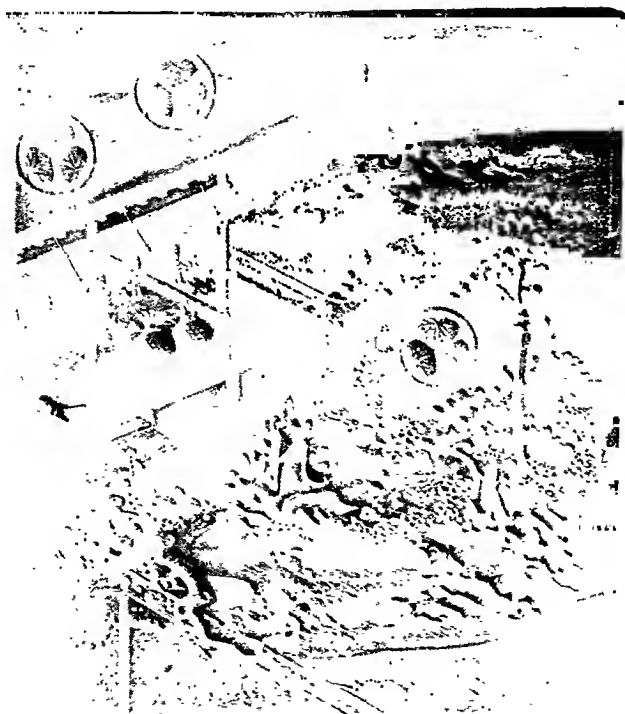
chrysanthemum (*Kiku*), although Professor Gowland contends it is the sun and its rays,—a similar design to which is, curiously enough, to be seen on a Rhodian gold ornament in the British Museum. All of these are being perpetually forged for the European market. The national flag is a red ball (the rising sun) on a white ground.<sup>1</sup>



No. 32.—Lacquer Tray, showing Kirimon. *From the Kodaiji Temple, Kyōto.*

<sup>1</sup> Badges or crests (*mon*) were universally used by the nobles and gentry, the former having two or three, according to rank, and the latter one. These adorned not only the dress but everything which was decorated. They originated on the field of battle where it was necessary to distinguish friend from foe, and a few represent some incident in the history of the family using them. For the principal *mon* see Appert's "Ancien Japon," and Strohl, "Japanischer Wappenbuch."

As a natural result of peace the arts in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries flourished to an extraordinary degree, and this continued until the commencement of the last century, when a decadence set in, as the result of excessive luxury. The policy of isolation from other nations, much as it injured the country, was little less than a blessing to its Art, which continued to be individual.



No. 33.—Hatsunéno Tébakō. *By Kōami Masashige.*  
(*Imperial Museum, Tōkyō.*)

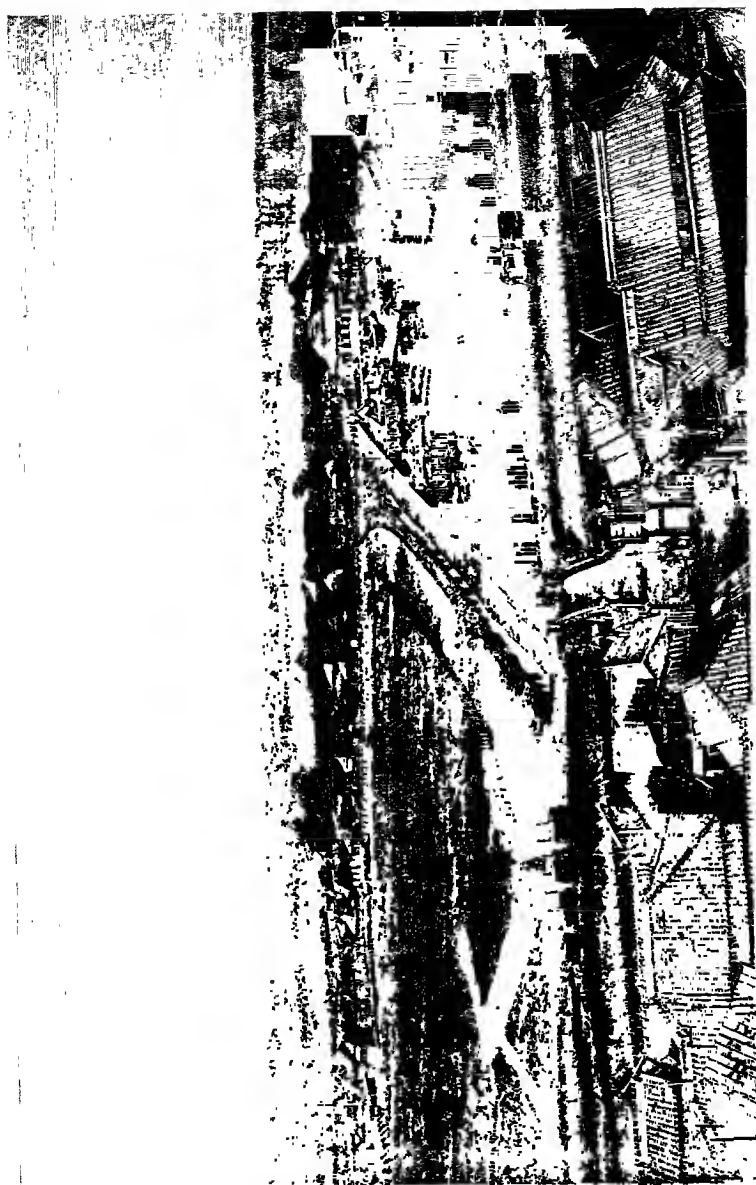
How isolated Japan became and continued may be judged by the following fact narrated by Professor Longford. The Dutch were during the whole of this time the only outsiders who were allowed, under most degrading



conditions, to occupy one tiny corner of the country at Nagasaki. In 1810 Napoleon annexed Holland and its colonies, and this little settlement, to which a ship used to be sent every year, was forgotten in the European convulsions. For four years it entirely passed out of the official mind, and not until the downfall of Napoleon did news filter to it of what had happened to its country. During all that time the Dutch flag had been daily hoisted on the factory, the one and only spot in either Holland or her oversea colonies where it was flying.<sup>1</sup>

But the isolation of a country of the importance of Japan could not be perpetuated in the nineteenth century. That it should have lasted into the latter half of that period seems almost incredible to those who consider it to-day. Yet it was not until 1853 that any Western nation sought to penetrate beyond the veil which so enshrouded it. In that year an American fleet visited Uraga, bearing a document requesting a commercial treaty, and left after announcing its intention of returning for a reply in the following year. The Americans were followed by English, Dutch, and Russian vessels, all bent on the same errand. The Shōgun consulted the Daimyō, who unanimously declared against the impudent intrusion, and announced themselves as ready to defend their country. When, however, the Americans returned the call the next year with a powerful fleet, a convention was agreed upon, to be followed by a similar one with England, Russia, and Holland. The Shōgun's government, which had seen the folly of maintaining a hermit-like attitude, was assailed not only by the "exclusionists" but by its traditional opponents of the imperial house. The Emperor Osahito was strongly opposed to a liberal policy and declined to entertain any treaty, and matters drifted on until 1858 when the *Bakufu* (Shōgun's government), seeing that further delay might wreck the country, signed the treaty. The Shōgun was at once charged with exceeding his authority, and it was only through the strength of his

<sup>1</sup> *Jap. Soc. Trans.*, vol vii. p 86.



No. 34.—Yokohama in 1863. From the “*Illustrated London News*.”



No. 35. — Yokohama in 1863. From the "*Illustrated London News*."

minister, Ii Kamon-no-Kami, that actual revolution was averted. Assassinations, however, were frequent, and Ii even did not escape, as he met his death in 1860. Every sort of charge was brought against the few foreigners who resided in the country as representatives of the treaty powers. They were accused of desecrating the Japanese religion by ascending the sacred mount Fuji and many were attacked. The assassination of an Englishman brought matters to a climax: the British Government, which had hitherto shown goodwill towards Japan, sent a squadron to demand reparation, and this not being given by the Satsuma Clan, by one of whose soldiers the death wound had been inflicted, the city of Kagoshima was bombarded. The Emperor thereupon took the field with an army to avenge this insult, and almost the whole nation joined him. The fighting, however, was only between the two forms of government, and it went on with alternating success until the Shōgun's death. This was followed in the year 1866 by that of the Emperor Komei. He was succeeded by the late Emperor Mutsuhito, who reigned for forty-six years over a united and contented country.

The views of Yokohama (Nos. 34 and 35) taken from the *Illustrated London News* of 1863 will not only be of interest to those who have known it in later years, but will be a fitting illustration of the enormous advance that has taken place in Japan in fifty years. In the foreground to the right is the village of Homara, with beyond it the canal that had been lately cut for the protection of the foreign settlement. On the further side are merchants' and government officials' private houses and the British Consulate. In 1854 its population was 1,000, in 1864 when this view was taken it was about 18,000. At the last census it was 394,000.

### CHAPTER III

## THE RELIGIONS OF JAPAN

"Japan is not a land where men need pray,  
For 'tis itself divine."

"*Manyōshū*,"—*Trans. by Chamberlain, p. 88.*



No. 36.—Christ bearing the Cross.

*From a Netsuké.*

*(Behrens Collection.)*

THERE is no nation existent or non-existent whose Art has not been materially influenced and assisted by its religion, and Japan is no exception in spite of its people not being highly endued with what has been termed "the religious faculty."

The religions of Japan are so complex that it will be impossible in a handbook to wander into a discussion on their mysteries. Herr Rein considers that no side of Japanese national life is so difficult for foreigners to appreciate, for although the religious instinct manifests itself in temples, idols, sacrifices, ceremonies, processions, prayer, and preaching, a scarcely intelligible indolence and ignorance prevent the attainment of much information on the subject. Only those who have the time and critical skill to search deeply, and receding from present ideas bury themselves in the old written traditions, can unearth the mysteries which lie beneath the accumulations of centuries.

Shortly, the religions are as follows :—

The earliest worship was that of the heavenly bodies,

wind, fire, thunder, and even the mountain streams and woods. Upon most of these I touched in my first chapter, and they need be dwelt upon no further here than to say that in one form or another their worship still survives. Following this came the deification of the illustrious dead and of ancestors; this is still continued, and in almost every house memorial tablets of dead members of the family may be seen, who immediately on their decease become "*Kami*," or beings to whom prayer may be offered. For long ages it has been the custom of the Mikado in his spiritual capacity and by virtue of his descent from the great sun-goddess, to exalt into *Kami*, patriots, heroes, or benefactors of the race. These are now said to number a million.

This sums up the ancient religion. Until the introduction of Buddhism in the sixth century it had no name, but it was shortly afterwards termed Shintō, or *Kami-no-michi*, i.e., the "Way" or "Doctrine of the Gods." "Shin" being the Chinese, "*Kami*" the Japanese equivalent for a superior, and "*tō*" and "*no-michi*" for doctrine.

Shintōism can hardly be said to have a definite creed or moral code. The whole faith has been summed up in the text from our Bible, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might." To this is due that thoroughness which is characteristic of all Art and other workmanship in the past, although it has influenced Art to a far less degree than its competing religion Buddhism, for it advocates simplicity of worship and life, and absence of decoration and adornment; it worships no images, and limits its sacred colours to red and white.

*Torii*, or double T-shaped gateways, are the principal external signs marking the entrances to its temples. Pictures of these erections are to be found in almost every illustrated book upon Japan. One will be seen upon the left of the lowest compartment but one of the medicine box, No. 9 (p. 12). Mr Satow considers that they were originally used for rests for the sacred cocks which ushered in the morn, but Mr Aston derives the word not from *tori*

a bird, and *iru* to perch, but from *toru* to pass through, and *iru* to dwell. Shintō *Torii* are usually of plain wood, and straight lined; Buddhist, when of wood, are painted or sheathed in copper, and the cross bar is carved; those at the temples of Inari Sama, the rice god, are red; they are sometimes of stone or bronze; recently a huge one has been made of cast iron!<sup>1</sup> Apropos of this, frequent representations of the cock which abounds near Shintō temples are to be found in Japanese Art. It is often depicted seated upon the drum used for summoning the faithful to service.<sup>2</sup> The interior of the temples usually only contain (1) the metal mirror, emblem of divine splendour, and of the sun; (2) *gohei* (imperial gifts), strips of paper, generally white but sometimes black, often gilt on the edges, cut out of one piece and attached to a wand; upon these the *Kamu* rests;<sup>3</sup> (3) a ball of rock crystal, emblem of the purity of the *Kami*; (4) two vases of pottery or porcelain, holding boughs of the evergreen *Sakaki*. No lacquer or metal ornament is supposed to be allowed. At home, a small *daïs*, *Kamidana*, raised above and apart from the rest of the room, represents the family altar; upon this stands a wooden shrine like a temple, as well as a vase, in which each morning a sprig of evergreen and a little rice and cake are placed as offerings. Each evening a lighted lamp is also so disposed. It will thus be seen that this religion offers little encouragement to Art.

The obelisk-like structures seen on either side of the view of the Kasuga Shrine, Nara (No. 37.), are lanterns in which the sacred fire burnt in ancient times. They are constantly seen in Japanese pictures, not being exclusively confined to Shintō temples.

A few words must suffice for the Doctrines of Confucius, which were introduced into Japan in the third

<sup>1</sup> A very thorough survey of *Torii* from the pen of Mr S. Take appears in *Jap. Soc. Trans.*, vol. iv.

<sup>2</sup> See No. 121.

<sup>3</sup> See No. 22.



No. 37.—Consecrated Maidens at the Kasuga Shrine, Nara. From "Sights and Scenes in Far Japan."



century, and soon were adopted by Shintōism. His philosophy, which is more a code of political ethics than of religious doctrine, is summed up by Rein thus: "His true follower is a good son, a loyal subject, and a faithful husband; amongst a hundred virtues, piety towards parents is the chief; amongst ten thousand sins, adultery is the worst." Such a teaching naturally assisted ancestor worship and the feudal system. It is still taught in all schools, and has impregnated the Japanese mind, but is now giving way to more systematic European teaching in metaphysics.

Japan has been termed the "Land of Great Peace." Those who glanced through the civil history of the country, as briefly summarised in my second chapter, will hardly believe such a title to be in any way applicable. But as regards religious history it certainly holds good. The advent of a new form of religion into almost every land of whose history we are cognisant has invariably been marked by warfare, persecution, and enmities of the most bitter character; but in Japan (if we except the expulsion of Christianity when it attempted to gain a footing in the sixteenth century, and the persecution of the Buddhists also under Nobunaga) for twelve hundred years two rival religions have continued side by side without any apparent hatred, jealousy, or rivalry.

Buddhism found its way to Japan in the seventh century, and made rapid progress. By the ninth century it had accommodated itself to the few tenets of Shintōism, and had by the aid of gorgeous ritual and splendid finery laid hold of and encouraged the religious sense which until then had lain dormant. To this religion is due, in a great measure, the nation's high state of civilisation and culture, and especially its great fondness and appreciation of nature. It bears a strong resemblance to Roman Catholicism, with its army of saints, its love of decoration, incense, vestments, processions, celibacy, fasting, and legends. Of the upper classes the ladies are almost entirely Buddhists, as are most of their husbands (though perhaps

not professedly so), and the country folk, shopkeepers and the main body of the people. Shintō was at the Restoration, for purposes of State policy, made the national religion, but later it was felt that any crusade against Buddhism was impolitic, and the two beliefs have now been restored to their former position. Shintō, owing to its association with the Court, retains a certain prestige, but Buddhism, although deprived of many of its endowments, continues to be the religion of the majority of the nation.<sup>1</sup>

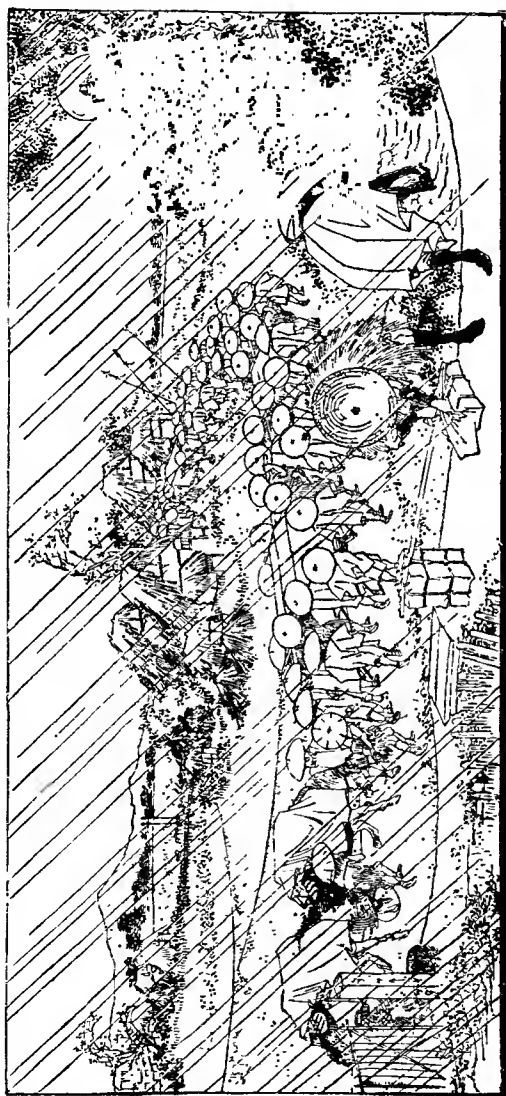
The rise of the popular school of artists has undoubtedly had somewhat to do with the decline of religion in Japan. The natural bent of the Japanese mind is toward the ludicrous, and "fear tempered with fun" describes the attitude of the popular mind towards religion. When, therefore, at the end of the eighteenth century a school of artists recruited from the ranks arose, which did not hesitate to present the gods in extravagant and comical postures and costumes, the result was fatal to that reverence upon which the continuance of the whole structure depended. As in Greece, so in Japan.

Until the Revolution of 1868 the mass of the people undoubtedly had confidence in their gods, but upon this event happening, the Buddhist religion was, as we have said, dethroned from the position of state which it had occupied under the Shōgunate, its possessions were confiscated, and many of its finest treasures, such as images of the gods, vestments of the priests, candlesticks, incense-burners, and other articles which adorned the temples, came into the market. Any one now journeying through the country will see Buddhas lying prostrate and uncared for, although probably many of these had fallen into neglect prior to the Revolution, owing to the decay of the religion itself. Hokusai's picture (No. 38) hits at religion in showing the traveller fastening the latchet of his shoe on the steps of a Buddha.

Christianity was promulgated with great success upon

<sup>1</sup> "The Creed of Half Japan: Historical Sketches of Japanese Buddhism." By Arthur Lloyd.

the first discovery of the country by Europeans in the sixteenth century, but it was so thoroughly exterminated in the middle of the seventeenth, that examples of Art



No. 38.—An Affront to the Buddha. —After *Hokuai*.

influenced by it are of rare occurrence. Of the few I have seen one is a Netsuké (No. 36), evidently copied from an Ivory of European origin, and the other a porcelain figure of Christ, illustrated in the *Japan Society's Transactions*.

A movement has been set on foot amongst a section of the educated Japanese to adopt Christianity as the State religion, not perhaps so much from belief in its tenets, as because of the secondary benefits its acceptance would ensure, and because it is the creed of the most highly civilised nations. The attitude of the serious portion of the nation towards Christianity is, at present, one of respectful hesitation, many of its tenets, such as the atonement through blood, being altogether contrary to the doctrines which have been inherited by those in the Buddhist faith. The missionaries allege that a drawback to its progress is, that amongst a considerable section of the foreign community a Japanese sees no attempt at any observance of the profession to which he is sought to be converted. But it has undoubtedly roused the Buddhists to increased activity. The whole subject is discussed at length in a chapter by Bishop Honda in "Fifty Years of New Japan."

The carved figures of the Buddha,<sup>1</sup> especially when they appear in London curio shops, have always a fascination for me. Unlike its Indian prototype, the Japanese idol usually shows considerable beauty. I have in my mind's eye one shop in particular, in which rows of neglected Buddhas used to be stowed on out-of-the-way shelves. The smoke-begrimed countenances of some witnessed to the years, now long since past, when they placidly surveyed through rising incense the crowds which daily came to pay them homage, and they seemed to cry out that below the dirt they retained all their pristine beauty. Others, more fortunate, were in dainty shrine cases, and brought to mind

<sup>1</sup> These pass by the name "Buddha," though there never was any individual bearing that title. Buddha means "awake," "enlightened," and to be a "Buddha" is to have attained to the highest degree of saintship.—Chamberlain's "Classical Poetry."

recollections of homes far away bereft of their household gods. The smaller and finer shrines are certainly to be numbered amongst the Japanese objects to be collected, for they combine the arts of carving, painting, metal and lacquer work. It is not every day that such beautiful ones come into the market as that reproduced in No. 146, but it is still not difficult to procure very fair and interesting ones at a moderate price.

There are few persons outside the Buddhist priesthood who can pronounce with certainty as to the identity of these idols, for they are only to be recognised by the peculiar position of the hands, fingers, and legs. Shaka, which is the Japanese conception of Sākya-muni, the Sākya sage, the Indian Buddha, is usually seated upon a lotus thalamus, resting his left hand upon his knee with the back downwards, and holding up his right hand with the palm forwards. He wears a jewel on his forehead, which often shines out with quite supernal effulgence. The same god, when in Nirvāna, lies on a raised bench. As a child he is borne upon an elephant, which presents a lotus flower to him with its trunk.

Amida, according to Anderson the most popular Buddha in Japan, is supposed to reign over the Paradise of the West. He is a much later creation than Shaka, and is usually represented as one of a trinity composed of himself and his two sons. When alone, a halo surrounds both head and body, his hands usually rest on his knees, palms upwards, fingers bent, so that the last two joints of each are in contact with the corresponding parts of the opposite hand. His hair is curled, and its being so is the result of an episode in his life.

The Buddha is often depicted surrounded by a quantity of Bôdhisatvas, a numerous body of saints who have to pass through human existence once again before attaining to Buddhahip.

Kwannon, who rules over Paradise with Amida, is the most popular divinity in Japan, maybe because there are so few goddesses in the Pantheon, and her aid is invoked

on every occasion, although for the most part as a figure of speech. In shrines and paintings eight varieties of the seven Kwannons are often depicted, namely, Senshu, or the thousand-handed (usually with forty), two of which on the lap always clasp the begging bowl. Bato, or the horse-headed, has four pairs of arms, and a figure of a horse's head on her brow. Jiuichi, or the eleven-faced; right hand open and extended downwards, left carries lotus or vase.



No. 39.—Shaka. *From a Wood Carving. (Author's Collection.)*

Shokwanzeon, or the holy; right hand elevated, with forefinger and thumb touching, left carrying lotus. Niorin, or the omnipotent; four arms, one of the right supports the cheek, one of the left holds a lotus. Juntei, with many arms, one carrying a sword. Fukuken, eight-armed; first pair in attitude of prayer, second carry staff and lotus, third open, fourth carry willow and rope.

Gorin, or willow, two-handed, generally carries a willow in hand.

In Murray's Guide we meet with descriptions of temples dedicated to Kwannon oftener than any other god or goddess. She is also represented holding a child in her arms, seated on a rock by the sea-shore, on a *koi* (carp) (No. 41), or accompanied by a dragon, as in illustration (No. 40). Sometimes she appears in male form.

Jizō, the patron of travellers, the helper of all in trouble



No. 40.—Kwannon. *From a Tsuba.*

the protector of pregnant women and children, is naturally a popular deity. He is usually represented with a pilgrim's staff with metal rings (*Shakujō*) in one hand and a ball (wisdom) in the other. His stone image with its benignant countenance is found more frequently than that of any other object of worship.

Besides these there are to be found in Japanese Art frequent representations of a series of ugly and uninteresting seers who become wearisome by their similarity, each, with shaven polls surrounded by a nimbus,

seated and merely distinguishable from one another by their having as an accompaniment some appendage, such as a tiger, dragon, *Hossu*, or fly-brush, or a *nioi*, or sacred wand curved and surmounted by a trefoil. (See right-hand figure, No. 63.) These personages are termed



No. 41.—Kwannon. After Hokusai.

Rakan or Arhats, and are sixteen in number. If any one can possibly require further information respecting them, he will find their portraits and names in Anderson's "British Museum Catalogue," p. 46.

Of not much greater interest are the Rishi or Sennin (*Sen*=old age without death, *nin*=man), a very numerous



and frequently depicted set of personages, who can neither be properly called spirits, genii, or divinities. They are persons who, when they reach old age, retire from the haunts of men for contemplation, and to practise austerities, and by so doing obtain supernatural power and practical immortality. Now the word has come to mean a Fairy. The commonest are Chōkwarō, who conjures miniature horses out of a gourd; Tekkai, a beggar, who emits his



No. 42.—Kinko. *From a Tsuba.*

spirit, also in miniature, out of his mouth; Kanshōshi, who floats on a hollow trunk; Rōshi, a little old man who rides an ox; Gama Sennin, a beggar, accompanied by a toad, which usually sits on his head; Ōshikiō rides a white crane; Kanzan and Jitoku, two boys laughing over a roll, the latter usually carrying a besom (*takeboki*); Rihaku, gazing at a waterfall; and Kinko, reappearing to his disciples, rising, as he had foretold, from the river on the back of a winged carp or *koi* (No. 42). Two

figures of demon-like appearance which are often portrayed are the *Ni Ō*, or Temple Guardians, one red, with an open mouth, representing the *Yō* or male principle of Chinese philosophy ; the other green, and with compressed lips, representing the *In* or female principle. They are emblems of strength, and small painted *Ni Ō* are often pasted to doorsteps to protect houses from burglars.

Actualities who resemble some of the foregoing are the mendicant priests, who are frequently introduced into popular prints. They may be recognised by their carrying pole covered with little bells, and a lacquered vessel for rice. Sometimes they have on their backs a shrine in which is an idol. Illustrations of these shrine cases supported on legs are often found on lacquer.

There still remain to be noted the Gods of Good Fortune, and a number of supernatural beings, deified and mythical heroes, animals, and demons. Information concerning them will be found in the two following chapters.



No. 42A.—A Pilgrim. *After Hokusai.*



No. 43.—The Gods of Good Fortune after a night's revel. *From a Pouch Ornament.*

## CHAPTER IV

### THE GODS OF GOOD FORTUNE

Sendō ya! Manzō!  
 O funé ya gichiro ko,  
 Gichiri, gichiri, kogéba  
 O Ebisu ka? Darkoku ka?  
 Kocha fuku no kami!<sup>1</sup>

BESIDES the deities actually appertaining to Buddhism and Shintōism, there are a legion of other supernatural beings which have been grafted on to them. It is probable that the majority were found in the Pantheon of the country when Buddhism invaded it, and were taken up by the priests of that sect as an easy means of avoiding hostility, and at the same time of putting into tangible form hitherto intangible doctrines.

Those most often met with are: The seven Gods of Good Fortune, Arhats, the Dragon, Tiger, etc., Rishis, Demons.

Representatives of the first named are to be seen everywhere throughout Japan; one or other of them in every house, almost upon every article in daily use; in my collection of metal-work certainly one hundred out of the one

<sup>1</sup> Child's New Year song—A thousand ships! Ten thousand ships! Hear the treasure ship coming—Gichiri, gichiri, gichiri, as they row! Is it the God Ebisu? Is it the God Daikoku? Hither come the Gods of Good Fortune.



No. 44.—The Gods of Good Fortune parodying the story of the Feast of Wada Yoshimori. By *Kiyomatsu*,

thousand pieces dealt with them. Four of the seven come under the wing of Buddhism, namely, Bishamon, Benten, Daikoku, and Hotei, and to these a certain amount of reverence is paid; the other three, Fukurokujiu, Jurō, and Ebisu, have, like the gods in later Greek times, ceased to be held in respect, and are treated only with an affectionate cordiality. As the late Dr Anderson remarks, they owe vitality rather to the artist than the priest, and have received nearly the whole of their extended popularity and influence from their lay supporters.



No. 45.—Jurō. *From a Netsuke.*

It has been suggested with some probability that these gods came into existence to supply a want. The people desired many temporal blessings; they therefore said, "Let us make gods who shall dispense them, and let these gods impose no slavish worship, no self-denial, no punishment for want of reverence; they shall not be of forbidding, but of pleasant aspect; we will worship them at home, without formal ritual, so we shall have no troublesome visits to pay to the temple, no priests to bribe, no threats affect-

ing our future state. There shall be no impropriety in asking for luck at cards, or good fortune in our amours." Accordingly each family set up one or other of these deities in its living-room, and paid to them a simple but nowadays meaningless homage.

Around the deities have been grafted certain accessories, by which they are readily recognisable.

Fukurokujiu, which translated means "wealth, prosperity, and longevity," is a little old man, clad in the dress of a sage. He is at once known by the sugar-loaf shape of his head, his vast brain having necessitated a capacious

cranium. He usually carries a twisted, knotted stick, from which depends a manuscript roll; above him floats a crane, at his side is a deer, at his feet a tortoise, in his hand a sacred gem. The crane and the tortoise (see Chap. VI.) are emblematic of longevity; the sacred gem typifies wealth. A figure very similar to Fuku is to be found in Chinese Art.

Jurō, or Jurōjin, the god of longevity, is hardly to be distinguished from Fukurokuju, and is probably only a



No. 46.—Ebisu. *From a Tsuba.*

variation of his comrade. He, too, as in No. 45, usually carries a staff to which a roll is tied by a string, and also a fan. His head attains to a height not less surprising than his companion's, but is usually covered with a transparent cap. He is generally of graver mien than Fuku. The bamboo, plum, and pine, emblems of longevity, will be found as a background to his figure.

Ebisu, or Yebisu, was the son of Izanagi and Izanami (see Chap. II.), but his royal parentage has not given him

a higher position than his fellows. He is a cripple, but that does not have any effect upon his jocularly, for he is termed "the smiling one." He is the god of daily food, and particularly of that very considerable portion of it which in Japan is derived from the sea. He is generally represented with rod and basket struggling with a *tai* or bream. See the sword-guard (No. 46), and note how cleverly the bamboo rod frames the subject.

Hotei has been to a certain extent adopted by the Buddhists. If the least dignified of the party, he is the greatest favourite. Always very fat (fatness is admired in Japan), half-clothed, enveloped in a big bag, after which he is named (*hotei*, cloth bag), he is accompanied by children,



No. 47.—The Treasure Ship.  
*From a Netsuké.*

of whom he is supposed to be very fond. His bag may also contain the "Precious Things," but it is used indiscriminately for sleeping in, trapping children, and other purposes.

A Treasure Ship comes into harbour every New Year's Eve, laden with these gods, who, like Father Santa Claus, bring

all sorts of good things, which in Japan are personated by the *Takaramono*, or "Precious Things." These comprise the inexhaustible purse, the jewel, the hammer, the hat of invisibility, the lucky rain coat (which becomes wings to the wearer), the sacred key to the *godown*, the weight, the clove (in the shape of a powder-horn), and the "*shippo*," or seven jewels, namely, gold, silver, red coral, agate, emerald, crystal, and pearl. By means of the "*shippo*" the artist symbolises in brief many a long story. The tribute paid by any subjugated personage in fairy stories is always *shippo*.

Daikoku is perhaps the most important of the Gods of Good Fortune, for he is the one who brings prosperity in

his train. In the two representations which we give of him most of his attributes will be seen. In one he holds a miner's mallet used for the acquisition of mineral wealth, and a bag containing the *Takaramono*. Beneath his feet are rice bales, indicative of wealth arising from the products of the soil. His broad cap, too, painted black, has its meaning; his long-lobed ears, distinctive of divine personages, are a mark of beauty. In No. 49, a modern sword-guard, he is represented as a merchant disclosing a satis-



No. 48.—Daikoku. From a *Tsuba*.

factory balance-sheet; the lid of the box, which contains the ledger, bears the title, "This is the prosperous shop."<sup>1</sup> He often is accompanied by a rat, which gnaws into his rice bales, thereby showing that when riches are gained they still require guarding.

Bishamon Ten can trace his derivation to a Hindoo

<sup>1</sup> In this he is akin to the Hindoo Ganésa, the elephant-headed, wise, and humorous god, who is invoked at the beginning of all enterprises, and whose mystic sign stands on the first page of all Hindoo ledgers.



deity. In Japan he is the god of prosperity and renown, and his true followers will obtain fortune, wisdom, long life, and pleasures. Some consider him to be the god of war, but this perhaps arises from his fierce looks and martial guise. Bishamon was incorporated into the Buddhist Pantheon shortly after its introduction into Japan, but latterly the artists have been taking away his reputation even to the extent of exhibiting him making



No. 49.—Daikoku. *From a Tsuba.*

love to Benten over his cups. He is usually habited in a Chinese costume, and holds a halbert in one hand and a pagoda in the other.

Benten (or Benzaiten) is supposed to be a Japanese version of a Brahmanic goddess, but opinions differ as to which. In Buddhist Art she is represented under the most varied forms, even as a many-armed goddess, often seated on a rock with a dragon beneath her, and sometimes surrounded by her sons, who are to be recognised by

various symbols (Anderson's "Brit. Mus. Cat.," p. 43); but in secular painting, with which we have principally to do, she usually wears a small tiara and a flowing robe, and carries a stringed instrument (*biwa*). On her crown she bears a white snake, which is a woman condemned to pass one thousand years in that guise for her sins. When depicted in company with her companion gods, it usually is as the musician of the party.

In the pouch ornament (No. 43) five of the seven gods, Daikoku, Fukurokuju, Hotei, Bishamon, and Jurō, are to be seen making night hideous with their shoutings as they return home in a very jovial condition. In the early colour print by Kiyomasu (No. 44) six are seen parodying the story of the feast of Wada Yoshimori: Jurōjin as Yoshimori, Benten as O Toru San, and Bishamon and Ebisu as Soga no Goro and Asahina Saburo.



No. 50.—Benten.  
From an *Okimono*.



No. 51.—The Spiritual Dragon. *From a Kōzuka.*

## CHAPTER V

### MYTHICAL BEINGS

IN previous chapters we have had principally to do with gods of good intent, who are happily more in evidence in Japanese Art than evilly disposed ones. The Japanese religions differ from many others in having but a small portion of their Pantheon set apart for this latter category, and we seldom find in the older and higher walks of Art an inclination to dwell upon the horrors of the Inferno. In the British Museum collection there is a set of *kakemono* representing the various grades of hell. They belong to the Buddhist school, and are said to be copies of originals dating from the ninth century. But Europeans fortunately are usually spared this phase of Japanese Art. A collection of over two thousand objects exhibited at the Fine Art Society in 1888 only contained three representations of Yemima, or Emma Ō, the Regent of Hades, and none of any portion of his domains.<sup>1</sup> In our last chapter I perhaps led my readers to infer from the easygoing way in which certain deities were treated that the Japanese had but little respect for the supernatural, and that with his inherent *bonhommie* he met even the

<sup>1</sup> His attributes are a cap like a judge's *béret*, and a huge mace. Before him sit two myrmidons, one of whom has a pen to write down the sins of human beings, whilst the other reads out the list of offences from a roll. He is probably derived from the Brahmin god Yama. The souls of the dead are judged by him and sent back to this world either in a higher or lower sphere according to their deserts. "He who has toiled as a slave may reappear as a prince; he who has ruled as a king may wander in rags."

most formidable of them with a smile and a joke. Such is by no means the case, especially as regards a vast but vague number of intangible beings who to him are by no means confined to spirit land, but permeate every corner of his little territory, and are to be met with at every turn. By these every act of his life is affected in one form or another, and it may be wrecked by their intrusion without any fault of his. He may be haunted by visions not only at night, but at his daily meals, he may even see reflections in his cup. These ghostly forms do not appertain solely to the dead. Ghosts of the ordinary type are termed *Yūrei*. But those just referred to are divisible into *Ikiryō* or "living spirits," and *Shiryō*, "dead ghosts." The former may detach themselves from their originals under certain influences and haunt the person who gave rise to those influences. An *Ikiryō* may proceed from disappointed love or hate without the knowledge of the person from whom it emanates. The late Mr Lafcadio Hearn's volume "*Kottō*" is given up to stories on *Yūrei*, and he showed how they pass into insects, especially flies, a belief which is very prevalent throughout the East, where persons may so conduct themselves in life that in the future state they will be on a level with the gods or re-enter existence in the form of goblins (*gaki*, or insects. So the peasant worried with the flies calls out, "*Kyo no hai wa, gaki no yo da ne.*" The flies to-day, how like *gaki* they are.

The *gaki* inhabits the *Gakidō*, a world of hungry spirits, which is the lowest but one of the five regions which commence with the world of mankind (*Ningendō*, and descend to hell (*Jigokudō*). Space does not permit of dealing with the thirty-six classes of *gaki*, especially as



No. 52.—Kiyohime with  
the Monk Anchin.  
From a *Netsuké*.

the subject is not a pleasant one and but few of them are illustrated in Art.

Amongst spirits with which we are familiar in Art the first place may be assigned to *Oni* who do not appear to



No. 53.—Exorcising an Oni. *After Hokusai.*

terrorise to any great extent those whom they would plague. *Oni* are usually mischievous imps which haunt the precincts of houses, and require to be warned off or exorcised, as they are, on certain festivals. On New Year's Day special attention is paid to them, and they are pelted off the

premises with showers of beans, as shown in No. 53.<sup>1</sup> *Oni* are a frequent subject for the Japanese artist, especially in *Netsuké*; so, too, is *Shōki* (Ch.: Chung Kwei) (No. 54), a personage who has been handed on by the Chinese. He was engaged by an emperor of the Ming dynasty, in the eighth century, to quell the demons which infested the imperial palace, and many are the variations, for the most part comical, in which he is represented in every branch of Art. The "demon-queller" usually seems to be having a very trying time to his temper.



No. 54.—*Shōki* sharpening his sword.

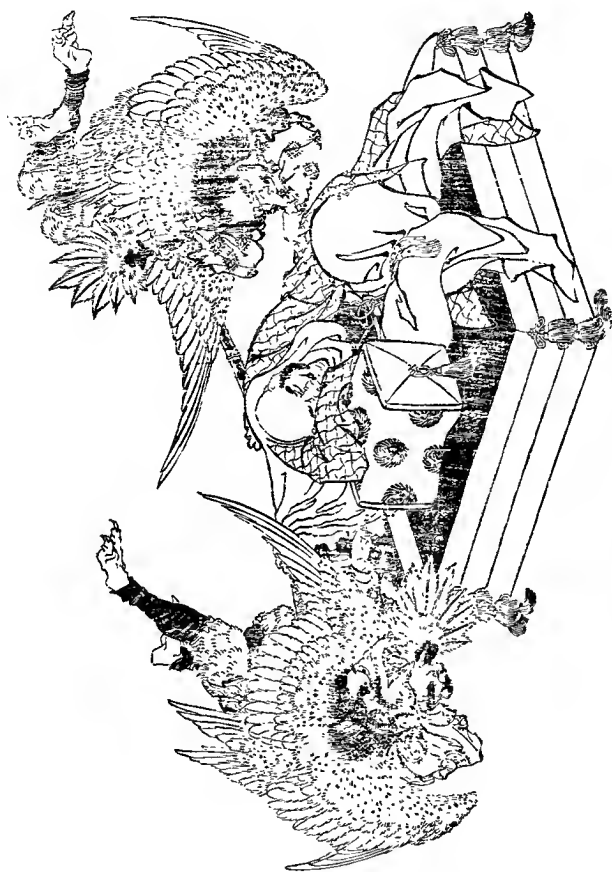
Somewhat akin to the *Oni* are the *Tengu*, or wood sprites, which are of two kinds: ordinary with human face and form, but with wings and a very long nose; and avial, with a bird-like head and claws. They are apparently harmless. *Yoshitsuné* learning to fence from the *Tengu* king, and young *Kintoki* catching *Tengu*, are frequent subjects.

Specimens of both kinds of *Tengu* are to be seen in the reproduction of *Hokusai's* print (No. 55), where a great Japanese celebrity, by name *Sagami Niudo Taira no Takatoki*, is being troubled in his dreams by the attendance of *Tengu*.

Another race of mythical creatures are the *Shōjō* (see Nos. 56 and 57). These harmless beings are held up to Japanese children as examples of the fatal effects of drink. It appears that they have such an inordinate affection for *saké*, that whenever jars of this beverage are placed on the

<sup>1</sup> We also see here the straw rope (*shiménawa*) which is hung over the house door at the New Year to keep disease and evil from entering. It is said to have its origin in *Susanō* (see p. 27), who once, in return for a service, instructed a peasant, *Sōmin*, in this method of keeping out the Plague God.

seashore they cannot resist it; they are caught when hopelessly drunk, and their long red hair and blood are used for the valuable dyes which are extracted from them. "As drunk as a *Shōjō*" is a Japanese proverb.



No. 55.—Tengu troubling the Sleep of Sagami Takatoki. After Hokusai.

Instances of human beings turned into demons are not uncommon. For instance, Kiyohimé, once an innkeeper's daughter, fell in love with one Anchin, a monk, and her passion not being returned, it became so strong that it transformed her into a demoness, and as such she is

depicted in our illustration. Could her back be seen, it would be found that she has assumed a dragon's tail. The story goes that the monk, in order to avoid her importunities, had at last to hide himself under the bell of the monastery of Dodoji; but even there he could not escape, for with her tail and the bell-hammer Kiyohimé beat it until, becoming red-hot, unfortunate Anchin was reduced to a cinder (No. 52).

Of mythical animals, there are several which become quite wearisome by their repeated use in Japanese ornament.

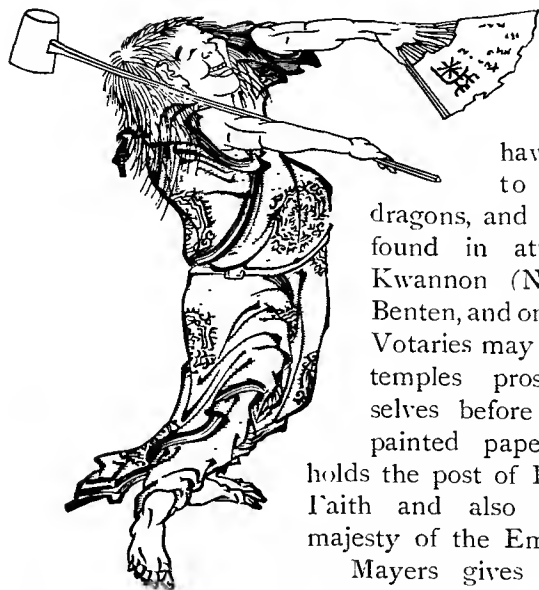


No. 56.—A Shōjō drinking Saké. *After Sensai.*

For instance, the Dragon (*Tatsu* or *Riō*). It is not perhaps utilised by the Japanese quite as frequently as by the Chinese, but each, like Western nations, has appreciated the wonderful adaptability of its lissom body to all manner of ornament. The Japanese monster is said to have originated in the Indian serpent. Probably the European dragon has the same parentage. The Japanese dragon is a composite monster with scowling head, long straight horns, a scaly serpentine body, a bristling row of dorsal spines, four limbs armed with claws, and curious flame-like appendages on its shoulders and hips. The claws are usually three on each foot, but are sometimes four and even five.



Japanese fairy stories are as full as our own of the doings of dragons, but they usually have a more benignant character than those which our children read about. Amongst these may be mentioned the child of the thunder, who, when he grew up, turned into a white dragon and disappeared in the clouds; the myriads of dragons round Mount Fuji; the carp which for its perseverance in ascending a waterfall became a dragon; and



No. 57.—Shōjō Dancing.  
*After Hokusai.*

the dragon king of the world under the sea.

The Buddhists have not hesitated to appropriate dragons, and it is frequently found in attendance upon Kwannon (No. 40, p. 56), Benten, and one of the Rakan. Votaries may be seen in their temples prostrating themselves before large gaudily-painted paper dragons. It holds the post of Protector of the Faith and also represents the majesty of the Emperor.

Mayers gives four kinds of Chinese dragons. The celestial dragon which guards the mansion of the gods; the spiritual dragon which causes the winds to blow, and has the rainfall in its keeping (No. 51); the earth dragon which marks out the course of rivers, and the dragon of hidden treasures which watches over the wealth concealed from mortals. It will be noted that the dragon is usually accompanied by a ball of varied form, but usually spherical. This is the gem of omnipotence. The Buddhist ornament *Hoshi no tama* is very similar. The yellow dragon is the most honoured of its kind.

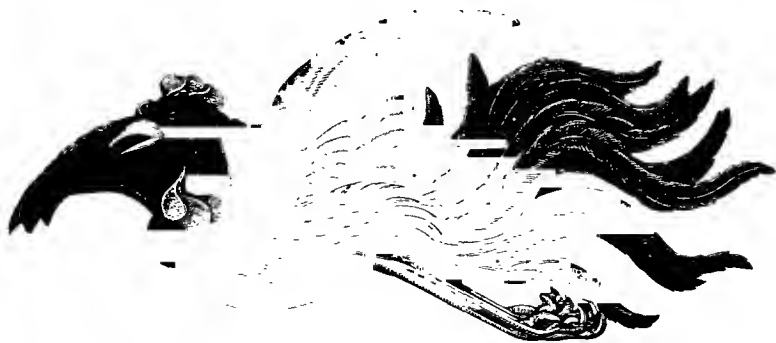
The Japanese artist uses the dragon in every possible way for the purposes of adornment. As the holder for a fan, the gem forming the knob of the rivet, as a pouch ornament, upon sword-guards, as a handle to a bell (No. 58, as a stand for an ornament.

The Tiger (*Kō* or *Tora*) was also imported by the Buddhists from India, *viz* China; it is considered the king of beasts, but not being indigenous to the country, artists are seldom happy in portraying it. It is very often depicted in a storm covering beneath bamboos, symbolising the insignificant power of the mightiest of beasts as compared to that of the elements. When merely seen in connection with bamboos, it is so because its power is such that it can traverse a thousand miles at a stride, even through a bamboo forest.

The *Hō*, or *Hōhō* (No. 59), is drawn more frequently than almost any other bird, and from its being a combination of several, is almost invariably wrongly named by foreigners.



No. 58.—Dragon Netsuké in form of Temple Bell.



No. 59.—Hō. From a Pouch Ornament.

In China it has the head of a pheasant, the beak of a swallow, the neck of a tortoise, and the outward semblance of a dragon; but the Japanese artists usually make it up as a concoction of pheasant, bird of paradise, and peacock, treating its tail as regards shape and colour just as it suits their design. Further reason for its frequency in Art, besides its capability of artistic treatment, is, that its presence is significant of good in the near future; consequently it has usually appeared at the birth of those who afterwards attained to fame.

The tortoise (*Kamé*) is the fourth sacred supernatural creature, the others being the dragon, tiger, and *hō*. The marvellously realistic representations of this reptile which have been produced in bronze by Seimin do not represent the supernatural tortoise. This is almost always invested with a hairy tail of considerable proportions, in evidence of its being of a great age, for that appendage does not grow until it is at least five hundred years old. It thus poses as the emblem of longevity, and when in addition it bears on its back the mountain of the immortals, it is figurative of strength. The origin of the tail is curious. Tortoises in Japan are subject to a growth of a parasite, a plant, *conferva*, which attaches itself to its shell. This, when the animal swims about, surrounds the under part of its back with long green locks called *mino gamé* from a resemblance to the grass coat worn by peasants in wet weather. (Nos. 38 and 90). The marine turtle (*Yasawa*) grows to a great size. One caught off Kazusa measured seven feet in diameter. Tortoise-shell, notwithstanding this, is usually imported

The *Kirin*, a miserable combination of a deer (as to its body), a dragon (as to its head), and a lion (as to its mane and tail), is fortunately seldom met with in Art. It is, however, said to be the "noblest form of the animal creation, and an emblem of perfect good; it treads so lightly as to leave no footprints, and so cautiously as to crush no living creature" (Anderson, B. M. Cat.).

Another monster which was alluded to in the first

chapter (p. 19) is the earthquake-fish *Namazu*. The *Namazu* is not a very common object in Japanese Art, but more than one artist has devoted a whole volume to depicting its vagaries.

The Lion or Lion-dog (*Shishi*) is not, I believe, a sacred animal in the eyes of the Japanese, although it is very often depicted as playing with or holding the sacred gem (No. 60). No one would recognise it from its portraits, for it is indued with a curly mane and tail, and tufts to its legs, which make its body of quite secondary importance. It is of Corean origin, and usually figures in connection with the peony. Together they symbolise regal power.



No. 60.—Lion-Dog with Sacred Gem.  
*From a Netsuke.*

Other animals, such as foxes, that have supernatural attributes, will be treated of in the chapter upon animals.



No. 60A.—A Yurei. *After Hokusai*



No. 61.—The Air Castle. *From a Kozuka.*

## CHAPTER VI

### FOLK-LORE AND LEGENDS



No. 62.—Ono-no-Komachi.  
*From a Netsuké.*

THE folk-lore, or legendary tales, which afford such never-ending subjects for the Japanese artist, are to many the most interesting of the fields that await exploration by the western student. The novelty of the majority of the legends, the similarity of some to those of other races, add a zest which is increased by the inability to gather anything from the to most of us undecipherable explanation which

lies ready to hand on the face of every printed illustration of them.

Japan forms no exception to the rule as to the world-wide popularity of story-telling. Children imbibe with their mother's milk the legends woven into their nation's history, and old and young gather round the *hibachi* (fire-brazier) to hear the oft-told stories of heroism and filial piety which form a necessary part of everybody's education.

As with everything else, a large portion of Japanese folk-lore is of Chinese origin: for instance, that connected with philosophers, sages, and filial piety. Fairy tales, on the other hand, are usually the product of the country.

Folk-lore and legends may be classed as follows: Those concerning philosophers and sages; those having their origin in history; those dealing with demons and

genii ; feats of strength, and skill in the use of weapons ; fairy stories ; stories of filial piety.

Amongst the philosophers who figure most frequently may be mentioned Confucius, Buddha, and Lao-Tsze (or Rōshi), discussing the symbols of the Yang and Yin (Mayer's "Chinese Reader's Manual," p. 293) ; the same three tasting *saké* (No. 63), and by their grimaces showing how differently it affects them ; one thinking it sweet, another sour, and a third very bitter, showing that great minds can afford to differ about trifles.

Rōshi (Ch. : Lao-Tsze), who was the originator of the Taoist philosophy, is often seen riding on an ox, bald-headed, large-eared, and long-bearded. Saigō Hoshi



No. 63.—The Three Saké Drinkers. *From a Pouch Ornament.*

(teacher of the law) is also represented as an old priest riding a bullock. He is usually in ecstasies at the sight of Mount Fuji. Hū-Yeo (Ch. : Kio-yu) and his friend, Sōfu (Ch. : Ch'ao Fu), were philosophic hermits ; the former is depicted kneeling at a stream and washing from his ear the taint of worldly ambition which had been conveyed to him in an offer by his emperor of a high post at Court. He is distinguishable from the Rishi Rihaku (Ch. : Li-Peh), who gazes in fervour at a waterfall, by his being usually associated with Sōfu, who leads his ox away from the stream, that it may not drink of the contaminated water. The seven sages who met in a bamboo grove, and held to a doctrine that wisdom in this world consisted in banishing care and indulging to a full extent in wine, are

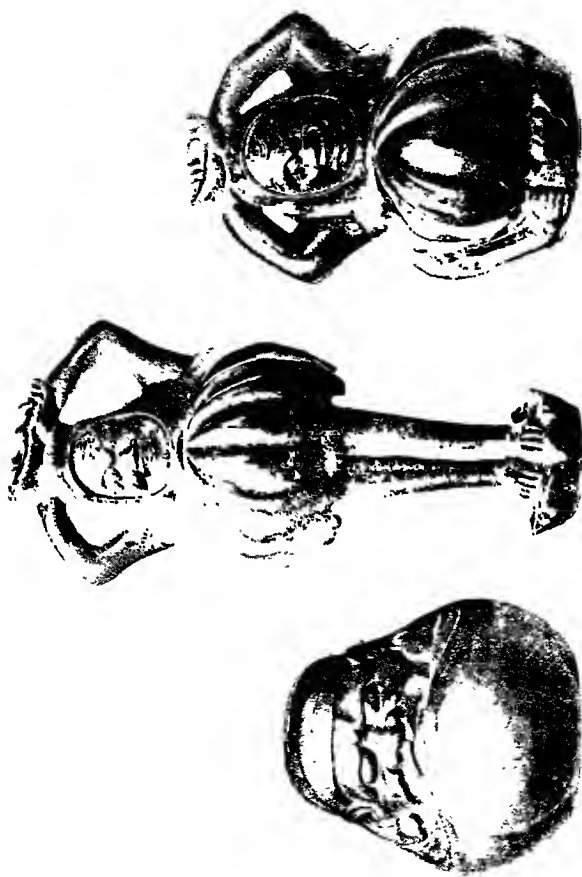
frequently found on ceramics, lacquer and metal work. Another sage, Sōsha Toba, is often painted, being recognisable by his hat of enormous width, and his riding on a mule through a snow-clad landscape. One of great renown, Kioshiga or Taikōbo (Kiang-Tsze-yo), is to be seen fishing in order to rid himself of the wrangling of a discontented wife, and to be able to muse undisturbed upon astronomy, geography, and the art of warfare. He used a straight pin and no bait, but the fish thought so highly of him that they insisted on holding on to it and being caught; he looked so wise over this pursuit that the emperor accosted him one day and requested him to become his prime minister.

In the illustration, No. 64, will be seen the Buddhist Dharma or Daruma, who, arriving in China in the sixth century, at once went into a state of abstraction, which extended over nine years, during which time he never moved; as a result he lost the use of his legs. The *netsuke* makers are very fond of treating him in all sorts of attitudes, usually without legs, scowling from a bag; the representations here given show him rending his garments and recovering the use of his legs.

Other personages of Chinese origin are Kanshin, showing an example of moral courage in crawling between the legs of a low fellow who had insulted him, rather than have a disturbance; Yojo (Ch.: Yu Jang), who stabs his sword into the garment of the man who had murdered his king, and whom he had sworn to kill. This he had failed more than once to do, owing to his foe's generosity, so he implored the latter to throw him his mantle, and he satisfied his conscience by stabbing it first, and then committing suicide.

The frequently depicted scene of a man handing another a shoe illustrates an adventure in the life of Chorio (Ch.: Chang Liang), a counsellor of the founder of the Han dynasty. In early life he encountered a poor and aged man, Kōsekiko, who had lost his sandal; this he promptly restored, and in return received a roll from which he derived all the wisdom which distinguished

his counsels. He is also seen in a river, seated upon a dragon, that he had tamed, handing the shoe to Kōsekiko, who is on horseback on a bridge. He also by his flute-playing charmed a whole army into deserting.



No. 64. — Daruma in contemplation, and Daruma stretching himself. From *Nichu*.

Foremost among Japanese legends are those connected with the country's martial glory. We have already written of one, Také-no-uchi no sukuné (see p. 31), who lived at least three decades for every syllable in his name, and served under six emperors.



A warrior equally ancient but of more ferocious mien than Take-no-uchi is the Chinese god of war, Kwanyu, who lived in the second century, but is still a popular personage in both empires. He wears Chinese garments and a black beard which reaches to his waist, and which he is usually engaged in stroking. He carries a formidable spear and is accompanied by a repulsive-looking attendant.

Amongst early legends is that of the pearl-diver (Ama) and the jewel which she recovered from the sea dragon at the cost of her life which she gave to secure legitimacy to her bastard son. She is usually depicted in the sea between a ship and a dragon with a dagger in the bosom of her dress.

Another early legend is that of Yamato Daké (No. 65), surrounded by the flaming grass which his enemies, the Yebisu, whom he was sent to subdue, had set fire to, and saving himself by the wonderful mowing qualities of his Murakumo blade, which is said to have been the identical one which Susanō (see p. 31) got from the dragon's tail. The personality of Yamato Daké is interesting as he is the earliest known wearer of the *hiuchibukuro* or flint bag, the progenitor of the *invō*. One containing flint and steel was given him by his aunt when he started in A.D. 110 on the expedition above mentioned.

We have already alluded (p. 33) to the hero Yoshitsuné and his henchman Benkei; pages could be filled with illustrations of the episodes in their lives. Besides those already mentioned and illustrated in my second chapter, there are many varieties of the battles of Yashima and Ujigawa. It was at the former that Yoshitsuné rode into the water to secure a broken bow which a party of the enemy were endeavouring to grapple with boat-hooks. It was at the latter that he ordered the bridge Ujihashi (No. 26) to be dismantled, and the soldiers to swim across, when the episode of Kajiwara Kagesuye and Sasaki Takatsuna occurred. Both these warriors were eager to have the credit of being over first. Takatsuna, who was on the slowest horse, was soon left behind, whereupon he called

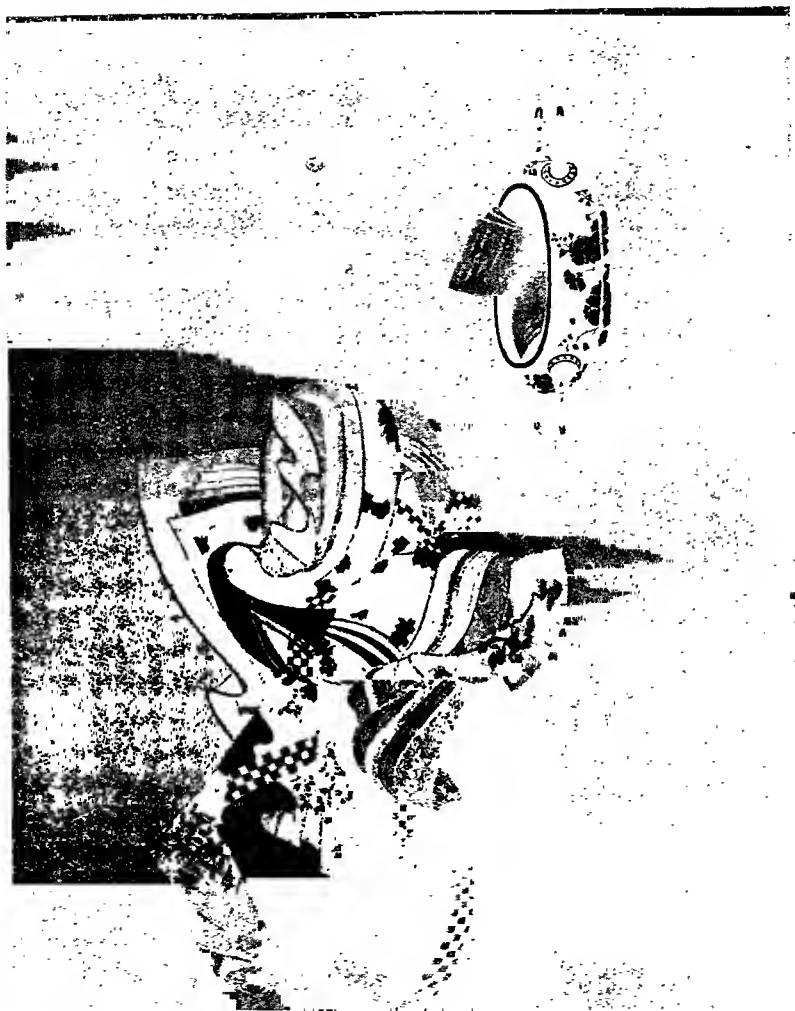
out, "Kagesuye, your horse's girth is loose." Kagesuye stopped, Takatsuna passed him and reached the opposite bank first, both riding unharmed through a shower of arrows. Yoshitsuné's headlong ride down a mountain side, so precipitous that only deer and wild boar could descend it, is also sometimes portrayed. So, too, is Takatsuna



No. 65.—Yamato Dake putting out the Flames.

crossing the river at the battle of Ujigawa in the midst of a shower of arrows, which he wards off with his sword (No. 70). He is recognisable by his badge of four hollow squares arranged in the form of a lozenge. Benkei's feats include his stealing the bell of Miidera, his writing a notice before the plum-tree at Amagasaki to save it from damage, and his

death amidst a shower of arrows. Kusunoki Masashigé (p. 36) dictating his will before killing himself is another



No. 66.—Ono-no-Komachi the Poetess. *Painting by Kōrin.* (Owened by Mr. Manao Taninori.)

common subject. Nittan killing the wild boar is often found, especially on *netsuké*, where he seizes it by the tail, or jumps on its back.

A very pretty legend is that of Ōta Do-kwan and the peasant girl. This warrior, overtaken by the rain, begged of the latter the loan of a grass rain-coat (*mino*). Without replying she ran off to the garden, plucked a camellia, handed it to Ōta, and ran away. Ōta went off in a huff, only to find out afterwards that this was a polite way of saying she had no coat; for had not a poet centuries before written of this flower, "Although the mountain camellia has seven petals, yet I grieve to say it has no seed (*mino*)."

The story of Ono-no-Komachi (Nos. 62 and 66) has been a favourite one with artists of every description for centuries. A wondrous beauty, one of Japan's six greatest poets, the idol of the Court, a miserable old hag, her corpse the prey of dogs—in these the painter and the sculptor frequently portray her. We see her showing the magic of her poetry by drawing down rain in a period of drought by her recitations, and in No. 66 (by Kōrin), when accused of having passed off as her own an ancient poem, washing it and thus removing the lines from a poem of hers that the slanderers had added, whilst the old writing remained. Another Court beauty who sank to indigence was Seishōnagon. Quickness in grasping a quotation was highly esteemed in olden days, and this fair lady is usually shown in the act of raising a blind to show the winter landscape, thus displaying her aptness at recognising an allusion. Another of the poetesses, Murasaki Shikibu, receives frequent notice at the hands of the artists, as she sits in the moonlight in the temple of Ishiyamadera overlooking Lake Biwa, and composes the great romance of the *Genji Monogatari* (*post*, p. 139).

The story of the "oil thief," as he is sometimes called, is an amusing one. Tadamori was once accompanying the Emperor Shira Kawa Hono on a nocturnal escapade when in one of the streets of Kyōto they met what in the rain they mistook for a demon, with flames of fire encircling his head. The emperor sent forward the valiant Tadamori who went for the demon and threw him.

According to some the demon was only an oil thief on his way to steal oil from the lamps; according to others it was an old bonze or priest, on his round to replenish them. Whichever it was, the artist always arrays him in the peasant's grass coat (*mino*) and straw hat (No. 67).

A noble playing the flute in No. 68 is Hirai Yasumasa. The would-be assassin is Hakamadare Koresuke, a notorious



No. 67.—Tadamori and the Oil Thief. *From a Tsuba.*

freebooter, who could not murder him on account of his commanding attitude during his flute-playing. Flute-playing was much indulged in by the nobility, and fine-toned flutes became celebrated and of great value.

Another story connected with music is frequently illustrated. In the tenth century there was a great musician, a nobleman named Hakuga-no-Sammi. A greater than he, Semimaru, lived in retirement, and

none could fathom the mystery of a melody which he played on his lute. Hakuga for three years listened in vain at his gate, but one autumn evening he heard the tune, and when it was ended he further heard the musician say, "Alas, that there should be none to whom to transmit this precious possession!" The dénouement is, of course, that the nobleman enters, makes himself known, and becomes Semimaru's pupil.

Onono Tofu, one of the three greatest experts in Japanese calligraphy, who lived in the tenth century, and a toad play



No. 68.—Hirai Yasumasa and the freebooter Hakamadaie Koresuke.

in Japanese Art the part of Robert Bruce and the spider. Onotofu was a terribly bad writer and would have given its practice up in despair had he not learnt the lesson of perseverance by watching the creature after countless attempts to jump to a willow bough, at last succeed. The carp (see *post*, p. 181) is another type of perseverance.

Endo Morito, the unfortunate penitent, who for one-and-twenty days stood under the icy torrent of Nachi, is often portrayed by metal-workers who wish to show their skill. At a temple at Meguro there is a waterfall under

which penitents are still wont to stand to wash away their sins. Fudo, the god of the lower world, or his messenger, bearing the wand of pardon, is a usual companion of Endo. Fudo, "the immovable one," who is identical with Dainichi Nyorai, the god of wisdom, has usually as accompaniments a sword, representing intelligence, flames, typical of wisdom, and a rope to bind evil-doers. He is the patron of waterfalls, although represented as surrounded by flames. He often appears on sword furniture.

There are many legends in which demons and genii<sup>1</sup> take a prominent part. Principal amongst these must be



No. 69. — Endo Monto under the Nachi Waterfall.

reckoned the stories of Yorimitsu (or Raiko) and the Shiuten Doji, and of Watanabe and the demon spider. These are too long to tell here, but they may be studied in a remarkably graphic series of drawings in the British Museum. The latter legend also finds a place upon sword

<sup>1</sup> The queen of the genii, Seiōbō, is usually depicted as a Chinese princess, with two female attendants carrying a fan and the peaches of longevity. According to Anderson, the assemblage of the Rishi at her mountain home in Central Asia is one of the common Art motives of the old Chinese and Japanese artists. She must not be mistaken for the dragon queen, who is usually represented clothed in robes of shells and coral.

furniture (No. 182), and is easily recognisable. So too does the encounter of Watanabe with the beauteous maiden: first Watanabe riding his horse, then her transformation into a demoness who seizes him by the hair; next the demoness's discomfiture and loss of her arm, which is borne away triumphantly by Watanabe; lastly the warrior beguiled by the old woman and losing his trophy.<sup>1</sup>

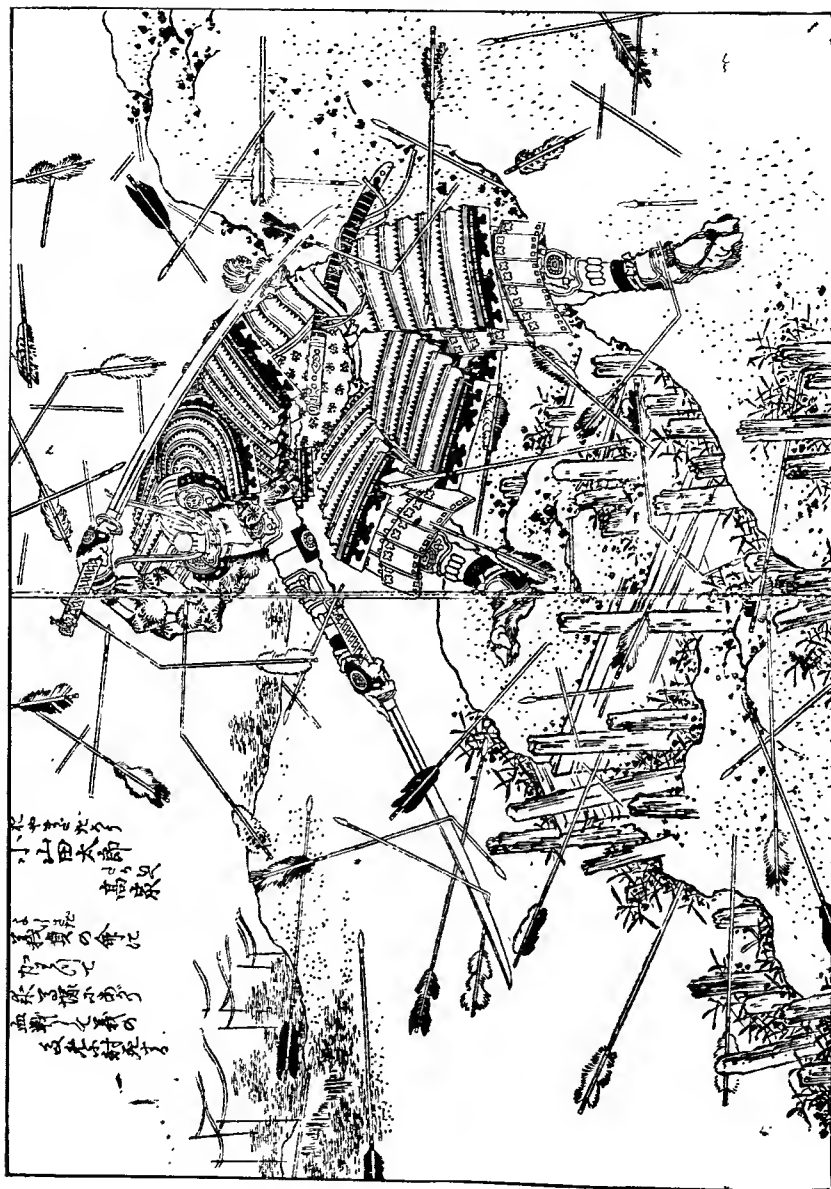
Amongst feats of strength will be found those of Asahina Saburo in his combats with Soga no Goro. He may be seen wrestling, warding off rocks thrown down upon him, struggling with sharks, etc. So, too, Gōshisho (Ch.: Wu Yün), a Chinese general, who showed his strength and learning in a competition by composing and writing a stanza whilst holding up a three-legged *koro* (*kanayé*), weighing one thousand pounds. A striking picture in the British Museum collection is Hokusai's Tamétomo holding his bow against the united efforts of four demons, during their visit to their island home, Onigashima. Then there is Kintaro, or Kintoki, the child of the forest, the boys' idol, who is usually depicted on kites wielding an enormous axe, or wrestling with the *tengu* or a wild boar.

The bow and arrow (*yumiya*) in olden times held the first place among weapons, Yumi-ya Hachiman being the war-god's appellation. Manifold are the facts narrated concerning this arm. As lately as 1852 an archer of the Sakai clan fired over 10,000 arrows in twenty hours, of which more than half hit a target 128 yards away.

Among many instances of skill in the use of the bow may be cited the oft-illustrated tale of the death of the *Nuyé* (which had the head of a monkey, the body of a badger, the legs of a tiger, and the tail of a snake) shot by Minamoto-no-Yorimasa and his follower, Ii-no-Hayata. So, too, Hidesato killing with an arrow from a bow, which required

<sup>1</sup> This legend must not be confounded with one laid four centuries later, that is in the fourteenth century, wherein Hikonichi going to the play compassionates a beautiful girl, who feigning tiredness is carried by him, and turns into a demoness.





No. 70.—Oyama Taro Takaiyé wearing Nitta Yoshisada's armour to deceive the enemy.

five men to bend it, the giant centipede which infested Lake Biwa. Nitta no Shiro, the Samurai who saved the Shōgun Yoritomo's life by jumping straight from his horse's back on to that of a wild boar and killing him, is the subject of frequent illustration.

Urashima (No. 71) is the Japanese Rip Van Winkle. In following his calling as a fisherman, he caught a tortoise, which, as we have seen (p. 76), lives to a great age. He had compassion on the animal and spared its life, whereupon it was transformed into a beautiful princess, in whose boat and company he rowed away to the "Air Castle" (No. 61). After a space of three years, as he supposed, he prevailed upon the princess to allow him to return home. Reluctantly consenting, she gave him a casket, which he was not to open if he wished to see her again. On his arrival at his birthplace he found that the last



No. 71.—Urashima. *From an Ivory Okimono.*  
(Tomkinson Collection.)

of his family had been dead many hundreds of years. He was then tempted to open the casket, whereupon he suddenly changed into a wrinkled old man, and his spirit passed into a crane. In this form he rejoined the tortoise, and lived happily for ten thousand years. A ballad on

the subject is to be found in "Manyōshū," dated A.D. 760.

A badger emerging from a tea-kettle (No. 72) is a favourite subject of the *netsuke* and pouch-ornament makers. The kettle belonged to a priest, and one day on its being put on the fire sprouted out with a badger's



No. 72.—The Badger Tea-kettle.  
*From a Netsuke.*

head, legs, and tail. The priest did not like this, and sold the kettle to a tinker, who made such a fortune out of exhibiting it, that at last he retired, and presented it to the temple whence it came, where it received saintly honours.

The tongue-cut sparrow story (No. 73) is also popular, even on such inappropriate objects as sword-guards. The



No. 73.—The Tongue-cut Sparrow. *From a Tsuba.*

legend concerns a woman who, annoyed by sparrows whilst drying clothes, catches one and cuts out its tongue. Her husband, with whom it was a favourite, goes to the forest to find it, is there hospitably entertained by the sparrow family, and on leaving is offered his choice of two baskets, one much larger than the other. Being old and infirm, he selects the lesser one. Upon his return home he opens it and finds it full of gems. He is upbraided by his better half for his selection, and she goes off and obtains the larger one. Upon opening this, goblins emerge; even the cords which bind it are transformed into vipers, and these together soon make an end of her.

Momotarō, or Little Peachling (No. 74), is also very popular. *Netsuké* display the peach opening and the baby issuing from the kernel. His journey to the ogres' island, accompanied by the ape, the pheasant, and the dog, and his capture of the castle and treasures, is found upon pouch ornaments, etc. The old woodcutter who adopted Momotarō must not be confounded with the amiable old Chinaman, T'ung Fang-so, or Tōbōsaku, who ate three peaches, and lived in consequence to the age of nine thousand years. He is usually well dressed, and carries one or more of the peaches in his hand.



No. 74. — The Birth of Little Peachling. *From a Netsuké.*

A man dreaming that he sees an imperial procession coming to Court, offers a test of skill which the Japanese are not slow to avail themselves of. I once had a remarkable rendering, not an inch square, in metal-work. The dreamer is Rosei, who has for a thousand years been typical of the vanity of human greatness. He passed in a dream from poverty to wealth, from insignificance to greatness, through a lifetime replete with events, in the space



No. 75.—The Dream.  
By Utagawa Toyonobu.

occupied by the preparation of his supper. The subject is frequently caricatured. Our illustration by Toyonobu (No. 75), an artist of great distinction who died young and whose prints are very rare, represents a young man dreaming.

There are some hundred stories of filial piety of Chinese origin, and a quantity which are distinctly of native growth. Twenty-four, however, is the number of the paragons which the Japanese affect. A diagram of these will be found in Anderson's "British Museum Catalogue." Those most frequently met with are Mōsō, who obtained bamboos for his mother; Yōko, who clung to a tiger which had sprung at her father, and saved him; Gomō, who would not drive away the mosquitoes which stung him, lest they should settle on his parents; and Shibaonko, having the sense, notwithstanding its value, to break the water jar into which one of his playmates had fallen (Mayers, 199). The Japanese see filial piety even in the lower orders of creation: *Karasu ni bampo no kō are*, "The filial duty of feeding one's parents is known even to the crow."

There is little room left to describe the anthropological and zoological myths, which add nothing to Art except repulsive ugliness. They too hail from China, and the Japanese have added to them all that is interesting and amusing. Those

oftenest met with are Tenaga and Ashinaga (Long Arms and Long Legs) helping one another to fish, Whirling Neck craning his head over and round his fellows, and the vampire woman whose lower extremities die away into mist.

For further details the reader is referred to Anderson's "British Museum Catalogue," Griffis's "Fairy Stories," Mitford's "Tales of Old Japan," Joly's "Legend in Japanese Art," Tomita and Lee's "Japanese Treasure Tales," and James's "Green Willow."



No. 75A.—A Bowman. *After Hokusai.*

## CHAPTER VII

### JAPANESE MANNERS AND CUSTOMS

HAVING completed our glance at the land of Japan, its history, religions, and folk-lore, our attention may now be directed towards some of the queries which arise out of almost every representation that we encounter of the personalities and the manners and customs of the inhabitants of the country.

As yet the Japanese artist has mainly confined himself to the delineation of his countrymen as they existed prior to the introduction of western fashions. The long line of artists whose works, extending over several centuries, are preserved to us, were always conservative and restrained by tradition. Being of good social position they naturally went for their subjects to the glorious past, and limned the lineaments of those who had become illustrious in their nation's history. It was not until early in the eighteenth century, after many years of profound peace, and when the people had apparently tired of the constant repetition of the doings of deities, warriors and the Court, that any variation occurred. The fashion then arose for popular actors to have their portraits executed in their most gorgeous dresses, and acting their favourite plays. Chromoxylography came to the front, and the artist was enabled to do some justice to the magnificent clothing of the fair sex. Somewhat later the delineation of the Japanese in his rags was thought of, and artists taken from amongst the masses presented to us those photographic portraits of humble life which give all the information we can desire concerning it. Had it not been for them we might have imagined that in those times everybody in Japan was



隅田川上流

清長画

TWO GIRLS WALKING WITH SAMURAI. By Te n Kiyonaga.





clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day.

The principal source, undoubtedly, from whence we gather our ideas upon Japanese life is the illustrated books<sup>1</sup>



No. 76.—Japanese Workmen and Conjurers. From Hokusai's "*Manga*."

and leaflets which now find their way here in such prodigious numbers. Little of what they contain can be

<sup>1</sup> It may be worth while to mention that Japanese books commence at what to us is the end : a remembrance of this is of some assistance to the understanding of the illustrations.

understood by those who are strangers to the language, but that little can be increased by some knowledge of the social status, dress, and habits of the society which they illustrate.

Let us then consider what these are, or, I should say, were, for I shall only deal with them as they existed prior to the Revolution of 1868.



No. 77.—Peasant and  
Child.  
*After Hokusai.*

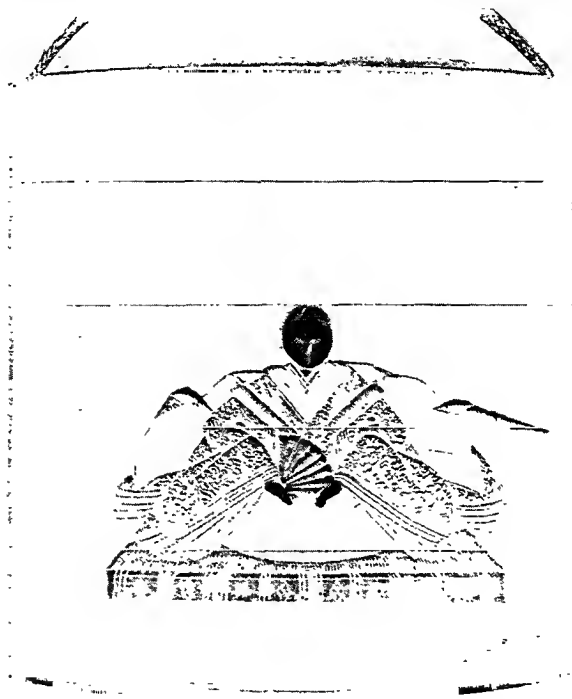
The effigy of the Emperor seldom finds a place in Art. It was until the last era assumed that he and his surroundings were too far above ordinary mortals to be spoken or written about; his face was hidden from the view of his subjects, and his personality

can only be recognised by his legs and feet being seen below a bamboo Venetian blind. The Shōgun, on the contrary, frequently appears in Art.

The dual government which existed between the Emperor and Shōgun has already been explained (p. 39). We will therefore commence our survey of society with the next grade, namely, the Daimyō, each of whom was a feudal lord, practically king in all but name of his own territory, and with a revenue which in many instances amounted to a quarter of a million sterling. These maintained both at their town and country palaces a small army of retainers, and the pomp, display, colour, and movement afforded by their frequent progresses through the country must have been a feast for the artistic eye. A representation of a visit of ceremony is portrayed at p. 100, and it is a frequent subject in the adornment of screens, walls of houses, and *makimono* or illustrated rolls. The illustration (No. 78) represents the wife of a daimyō seated on a throne

(the daimyō is on the reverse), although it is only a doll dressed as such. (See festivals, p. 160.)

Besides these there was at the Court of the Emperor a nobility, or *Kugé*, consisting of some 155 families, all affecting imperial descent; these, from being for many

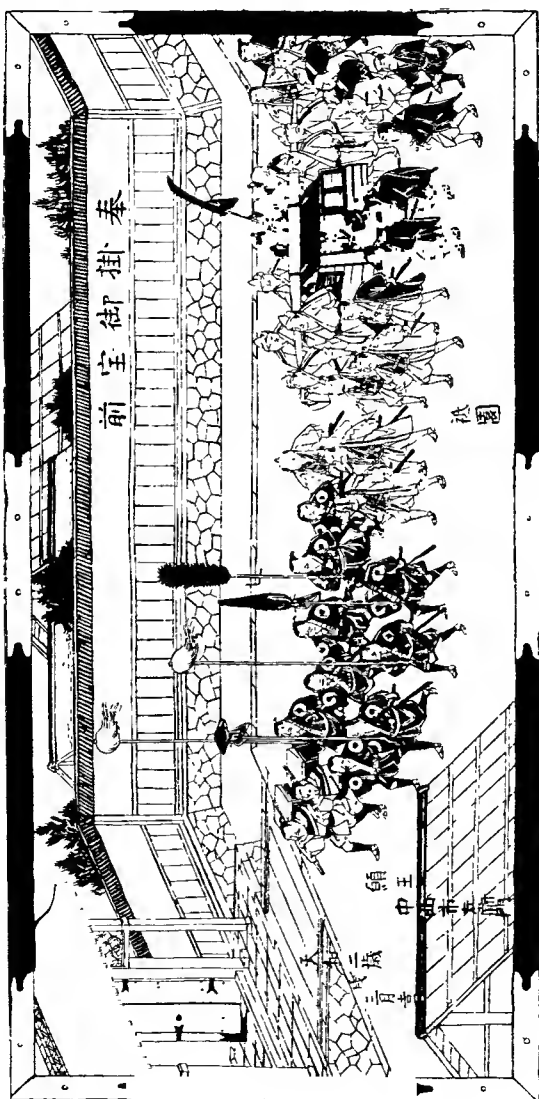


No. 78.—A Daimyō's Lady. A Doll at the Katsusekku (Girls' Festival).  
*From an Inwō.*

centuries the governing class, lost both power and possessions by the advent of the Shōgun.

Next in order came the military, who filled most of the offices of state. At the time of the Revolution these numbered some two of a thirty-six million population. The position occupied by them can only be explained at some length, but it cannot be passed over, for its doings are always being illustrated in Art.

For a thousand years the people of Japan were divided by law into two classes, the military and the civil. The former during all that period not only monopolised arms



No. 79.—A Visit of Ceremony. From a Sixteenth-Century Picture.

but the literature, patriotism, and intellect of the country. This division produced the *Samurai*, who at his best was all that was ideal in a man. The poet writes of him, "Should any ask of the heart of the *Samurai*, show him the wild cherry fragrant in the morning sunshine," *i.e.*, strong beauty, bright promise, and refined purity, throwing abroad its perfume on a summer morn. To support him and his, the country was taxed to the extent of nearly four millions a year, an imposition which was only commuted in 1876. But the *Samurai's* code of honour would not allow him to work or engage in business, hence it is not surprising that the majority of them were idle fellows, who only obeyed their lord, whom they protected on the battlefield or against plotters, and for whom they



No. 80 —Suketsuné, a Japanese General.

were willing at any time to die, even by their own hand, if honour required it. In a novel, *Chiushingura*, which is written in praise of Japanese chivalry, we find a proverb, "Slaughter and rapine, *Samurai's* daily deeds!" Upon festive occasions they appeared very bravely dressed, not perhaps quite so *cap-à-pié* as the general in our illustration (No. 80),

but not a great way removed from him in point of magnificence. It is difficult to believe that such a cumbrous uniform was worn later than what we should term the Middle Ages, but the isolation of Japan prevented her utilising the discoveries of modern warfare, and her soldiery were arrayed somewhat like this until within the memory of some now living (see the illustration, No. 4, of the review at Yokohama on the 20th October 1864). This review was the first occasion on which Japanese and British troops were brigaded together. Sir Rutherford Alcock had arrived in Japan a short time previously escorted by a detachment of the 20th Regiment, and it is probably this body that is seen in the distance, together with some Beloochees. The British went through their manœuvres first, after which the Japanese in armour, to the blowing of conch shells and howls (which, beginning in a low tone, gradually swelled into a yell of defiance), went through various exercises amidst the cheers of the British. Illustration No. 178 shows the curious mixture of modern and ancient weapons. The soldiers are evidently being drilled by a *Samurai*. The old uniform need not be described, for there are few curiosity shops which are without a suit, in which some of the old helmets are often of fine workmanship.

As avengers of their lord's murder, *Samurai* appear over and over again in Japanese Art. They are distinguishable in their ordinary dress by their wearing on their *kimono*, on each sleeve, between the shoulders, and on each side of the breast, the family badge; also short hose reaching below the calves. But carrying two swords (No. 83) was their most prized privilege, and even their children were indulged with imitation ones. "The sword is the soul of the *Samurai*" is a Japanese motto. This may well be, when their other equally prized privilege was the *Hara-kiri*, more properly *Seppuku*, called in Europe "Happy Despatch," for which their second and shorter sword was kept. This terrible mode of suicide is also a frequent subject in pictorial art. The ceremony is given in detail in Mitford's "Tales of Old Japan."

The *Samurai* is now a being of the past, so much so that even the era when he existed, although not fifty years ago, is termed *mukashi* or "ancient days." So also the distinctions which separated him from the professional classes have practically disappeared. For instance, of 668 cadets recently in the Military College at Tōkyō, 12 were sons of nobles, 357 of *Samurai*, and 299 of the lower middle class.

As the warrior was to all outward appearance a very different sort of being to his descendant of to-day, so the lady whom the artist has delighted to delineate as the belle of his mediæval story differs from those of her sex who now people the cities. The lady in the picture book is not handsome, but that was not the fault of the model, but of a system which compelled the artist to draw her features after certain rules which he dare not transgress. Examine any from the volumes of celebrated beauties, Masanobu's "Girl Walking" (No. 81), for instance, and they are all precisely alike. Two slits, very far apart, for eyes, a long, slightly aquiline nose, a tiny mouth, and a long, oval, swollen-cheeked countenance. She wears a trailing robe of silks of the most varied patterns (No. 82), and her raven tresses oftentimes sweep the ground, and she used when she married to shave off her eyebrows and blacken her teeth.

The various highly ornamented articles which we encounter witness how this lady passed her time. The embroidered *fukusa* and *kimono* show her skill with the needle; the *kōbako* (incense box) tells of her favourite pastime (the perfume-game of which we shall speak further on); and her playing cards, the pleasure she experienced in writing stanzas of poetry. Whilst the male sex devoted itself to the study of Chinese, the female cultivated the native tongue, with the result that a large proportion of the best writings in Japanese literature are the work of women.

It has often been remarked that the Japanese as represented in books and those we see in the flesh have but little resemblance. The reason is this: in Japan, the race is



divided into two almost distinct families. It is the nobility, claiming descent from the gods, with long visage, pale complexion, high forehead, aquiline nose, small mouth, and eyes placed obliquely, found in the environs of Kyōto and the province of Yamato which is the cradle of the race, that the painters, save the popular ones, have, with but little variation, taken as their model. The other family, inhabiting the western side of the empire, facing China, have a short face, dark complexion, low forehead, projecting cheek bones, flattish nose, eyes horizontally placed and widely opened. There is a third family of Ainu, but these inhabit the northernmost island of the empire, where Art has never yet penetrated, and consequently any delineation of their forms or features seldom finds a place on Japanese wares.

A constant source of complaint with European critics of Japanese artists is that they never draw correctly the human figure, and they querulously ask why should not the same brush which can model with such marvellous accuracy the lower orders of creation, be able to portray that other part of it which the artists of the Western hemisphere have always held to be the highest type of beauty? They who complain have little knowledge of the surroundings under which work is produced. Let us shortly compare the opportunities which a Japanese and a European artist have of modelling the human figure. The latter starts with a conviction that the human figure is the most glorious creation in the world. He has constantly before him not only proof of this in flesh and blood, but ideal portraits evolved by the Art of former ages. In his schools he has the anatomy of each component part explained to him, and he has to pass through a long course of study of the skeleton and the subcutaneous portions of the body before he arrives at a stage when he may draw it clothed in flesh.

The Japanese, on the other hand, has always been taught by his religion that the human body is a vile carcass of no worth, a frail and corrupt mass, which is only



奥村政信圖



No. 81.—Tanyé. Girl Walking. By Okumura Masanobu.

destined to rot and waste away. From the earliest days, too, it was deemed in society a breach of etiquette to show more than the face and hands and to be in the fashion meant covering oneself with many folded garments of the



No. 82. —Death in My Lady's Chamber.

richest material. In the schools the student was only allowed to study from the works of the old masters, who had a certain formula by which to draw the human frame. Under such a combination the figure painter had three things to observe—features with exaggerated expression,

a suggestion of sensuous movement and a portrayal of well disposed highly ornamented drapery. Whilst the savants of his country were versed in the anatomy and properties of every flower of the field, they were ignorant of the com-



No. 83.—The Two Swords.

ponent parts of the human frame, so the artist had nothing from which to learn.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I have a nineteenth-century text-book on the subject, which is based on a Dutch work on Anatomy, and is quite ludicrous in its incorrectness.

There is every reason to affirm that had the Japanese had the same facilities and inducements as our artists, he could have shown them the way to draw the human figure almost as perfectly as he now does the lower forms of creation. As a proof of this, I would point to the fact that the sculptors, restrained by no traditions, often limned it as well as have the draughtsmen of the popular schools who learnt upon lines of their own framing.

The dress of the people of all classes is<sup>1</sup> similar in shape, but with certain variations of cut which mark the rank of the wearer. The usual and often the only garment, both male and female, is the *kimono*, which, opening down the front (the neck being exposed), resembles our dressing-gown. It is kept in place by a girdle (*obi*), which is the principal adornment, especially of the ladies; this is wound round the body more than once, and is tied behind in a very large and carefully formed butterfly bow with long streamers.<sup>2</sup> The *obi* also held the swords. The large and wide sleeves form bags in which are kept, amongst other things, a supply of paper to serve as pocket-handkerchiefs. The ladies' full-dress *kimono* has a train several feet in length, stiffened with wadding, as has the court-dress of gentlemen. Among the higher orders the summer *kimono* is of light cotton, the winter of heavy silk. At the latter season all classes wear trousers and stockings, but these are usually only retained in warm weather by well-to-do people. At the date of the Restoration, ceremonial costume consisted of a *kamishimo* (upper and lower), the upper a waistcoat without sleeves, the lower trousers with a broad belt. These were worn above the ordinary costume.

The styles of wearing the hair have been very varied. At one time the males shaved it from their foreheads to the middle of the scalp, and bound the long cue into a top-knot which was turned forward and laid on the scalp.

<sup>1</sup> I still use the present tense although as regards many of those I write about it should be the past.

<sup>2</sup> Where the bow appears in front it is evidence that the lady belongs to the demi-monde.

This was in order that the helmet might fit comfortably, and that the hair might not cumber the eyes in fighting. This custom gradually spread to all classes. The fashions as regards children were equally marked. In older representations their heads are shaved except a circlet of hair round their tonsure, or three locks on the crown.<sup>1</sup>

Of all her possessions a Japanese woman most values her hair, and a title for the lady of the house is often "O Kami San," "she of the honourable hair."

An immense amount of pains is lavished on the head-dress, which, in addition to innumerable fashions of plaiting the hair, which vary according to rank and locality, also consists of combs and hair-pins of the most varied kind and material. These have formed the subject of more than one European collector's fancy. At present the fashion is almost entirely confined to the demi-monde. No Japanese woman can dress her hair herself and even the lower classes pay 30 sen (7d.) a month to a hairdresser.

The official head-gear in the past consisted of a black lacquer cap tied on without a pretence at fitting. A hood, sometimes formed out of the dress, was used in cold weather. Women wore a large kind of inverted saucer



No. 84.—Girl with Umbrella.  
*Ippitsusai Buncho.*

<sup>1</sup> Oftentimes seen in dolls.

and peasants wear a hat made of reeds, which is a protection against sun and rain, and which is often so big as to be taken for an umbrella, but amongst the lower classes any protection of the head is unusual. As a shelter from rain, a straw-plaited coat (*minogamé*) fastened round the neck is used by the lower classes, as are cloaks of oiled paper (*mino*), and, of course, an umbrella (*kasa*). Cotton socks (*tabi*) are worn, in which the big toe only is divided from the rest to serve as a holdfast for the strap of the rice-straw sandals, or of the clog. The former wear out very quickly, cost next to nothing, and can only be used in dry weather. Those which have been cast away litter everywhere the roadsides. In wet weather wooden clogs, which raise the wearer a couple of inches, are worn.

Sandals are always taken off on entering a house, even if it be a shop, so as not to injure or dirty the dainty mats. Foreigners should refrain from hurting the feelings of the Japanese by a failure to observe this custom, which is not easily observed with lace-up or buttoned boots.

The badges, or *mon*, seen in every phase of Art, whether embroidery, painting, lacquer or metal-work, are so conspicuous and interesting a feature of Japanese ornament that some short space must be given to them. It has been assumed that they are similar in many respects to European heraldry, but this is not so, for until the present era of Méiji Japan had no decorations for personal service, or any degrees akin to our peerage or knighthood. *Mon* were, however, hereditary, and were usually a mark of kinship, and were at times bestowed by Shōgun or Daimyō: they were also assumed at the wearer's will. Nor were they confined to the upper classes but extended to the *heimin* and even to courtesans. The higher classes usually had more than one *mon*, their retainers using not the principal (*jōmon*) but a subsidiary one (*kayemon*). On festivals even coolies would hire a *haori* (or overcoat) bearing *mon*, and they are to be seen now at their ordinary work with a *shirushi*, usually of a Chinese character motive, and having reference to the business



No. 85.—Nakajima Wadayemon, Ichikawa Komazo, and Kōsogawa Tanso (actors), the last as a woman. *Ikyō Shazai.*



name of their employers, on their back. Five *mon* usually figured on the *haori*, one on the back, one on either breast, and one on each elbow. Ladies on their *kimono* wore seven, namely, two additional ones on the sleeve.<sup>1</sup>

No notice of the dress of a Japanese would be complete without a mention of the fan, which used to be carried by everyone, from the generalissimo of the army<sup>2</sup> to the scavenger. Gentlemen affected only white paper of the shape usually worn by ladies in the West, coloured ones and those of leaf-shape (*uchiwa*) being used by women and children. It was even utilised for passing things on, such as letters, or as a substitute for a plate.<sup>3</sup> A million *uchiwa*-shaped fans have been produced in Japan for 800 yen.

Besides a fan a gentleman having no pocket carried a *hifuchibukuro*, or bag, an article of dress of which records extend to the second century, and which was usually attached to the sword. This bag contained, on occasions, flint and steel, a pipe, tobacco, a seal, and sometimes an *inrō*, but the last-named was more usually slung from the *obi* (see p. 108). A pouch (*kiuchaku*) for keys and money was kept in, and a *Tobako iri* was in the seventeenth century, after the introduction of tobacco, hung from the girdle. Merchants also carried a portable inkstand and pen (*yatate*).

In the Middle Ages the people were divided into four classes, called the *shi-nō-kō-shō*, viz., *shi*, military, *nō*, farmers, *kō*, artisans, and *shō*, commercial; below these were the *eta* people having to do with impurities, which even included persons who tended the sick and thus polluted themselves, and makers of brushes and other trades that had to do with foul animals, beggars, itinerant showmen, and brothel keepers, but not prostitutes (*Jōrō*).

<sup>1</sup> For further particulars see "The Constructions and Blazonry of *Mon*." A. J. Coop., *Jap. Soc. Trans.*, vol. ix. 280.

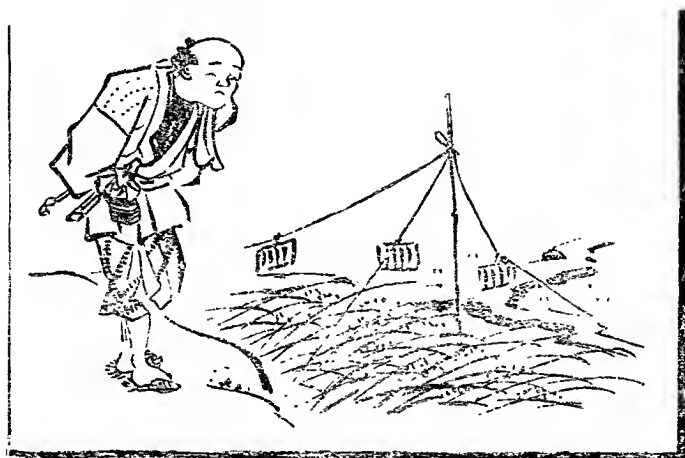
<sup>2</sup> The Iron fan was introduced as a weapon of defence, and covered the head when making the bow of courtesy to prevent harm when in a defenceless attitude.

<sup>3</sup> A fan or winged wand is carried by the Queen of the World under the Sea.



No. 86. Morning Mists at Ochano Midzu. A fan mount (*uchiwa*). By Hiroshige.

The condition of the Japanese agricultural peasant, cut off as he has been for centuries from all chance of an improvement of his lot, has never been a happy one. Left to the soil to till it, to live and die upon it, he has remained the same to-day as he was when first his class was assigned the lowest place. He is thus described by Mr Griffis, who passed several years in the country : " Like the wheat that he has planted for successive ages, the peasant, with his horizon bounded by his rice-fields, his watercourses, or the timbered hills, his intellect laid away for safe keeping in



No. 87.—A Farmer Surveying his Rice Crop.

the priest's hands, is the son of the soil ; caring little who rules him, unless he is taxed beyond the power of flesh and blood to bear, or an over-meddlesome officialdom touches his land, to transfer, sell, or redivide it : then only he rebels." See him as depicted by a popular artist, in the above illustration, watching his rice-field, over which hang bird scares (*naruko*). *Yosogoto no, naruko ne nigeru toruto kana!* "Poor dragon fly, scared away by the clapper that never was intended for you." His clothing can in ordinary weather hardly be designated by that title. In this respect he differs from his neighbour the Corean, who is so bashful

and self-conscious that even under the hottest sun he will not divest himself of a single garment. When the Japanese wears anything it is a brilliantly blue cotton *kimono* nearly reaching to the ground, with, in the case of the women, a scarlet sash.

Miss Bird states that : " It was somewhat remarkable to see telegraph wires above men whose only clothing was a sun hat and fan, and alongside their children returning from school well clothed, and with books and slates."

Unfortunately the picturesque dress of Japan is doomed. Almost all officials are now bound to appear when on duty in European dress, which is neither so becoming nor healthy as their own, and no travelled Japanese goes back from the European habiliments he has assumed.



No. 88.—The Smokers. After *Hokusai*.



No. 89.—The Rat's Wedding. *Kozuka by Shokatei Motohiro and Kaigokudo Masateru.*

## CHAPTER VIII

### HOME LIFE

"The land of gentle manners and fantastic arts."—*Sir Edwin Arnold.*

THE Japanese house principally differs from that of other nations in its want of substantiality. It is fixed to no foundations, for it merely rests upon unhewn stones placed at intervals beneath it, and it usually consists of a panel-work of wood either unpainted or painted black on the exterior face; sometimes it is of plaster, but this is the exception. Its roof is either shingled, tiled,<sup>1</sup> or thatched with hay (*kaya*). No chimneys break its sky line, for fires are seldom used. Where they are, their smoke issues from a hole left at the top of the angle of the gable. The worst side of the house is usually turned towards the street, the artistic towards the garden. The houses, as a rule, evidence the fact that the populace is poor, and that the Japanese does not launch out beyond his means, or what he can reinstate when it is destroyed, as it most probably will be during his lifetime, by fire or earthquake. Two at least of the sides of the house have no permanent walls, and the same applies to almost every partition in the interior. These are merely screens, called *fusuma* or *karakami*, fitting into grooves, which admit of easy and frequent removal. Those on the exterior when

<sup>1</sup> End tiles are often copied in miniature as ornaments, and those from famous buildings are much prized as curios both in China and Japan, being used as inkstones (*suzuri*), on which to rub Indian ink. An inkstone used by a celebrated calligraphist is also much treasured.



No. 90. - A Marriage Ceremony. - *After Utagawa Toyokuni.*

of wood are called *amado*, when covered with white paper *shoji*: these allow the light to penetrate; the shadows thrown upon them, when the light is inside, find many a place in the pages of the wood engravers. The interior screens are of thick paper, and are usually decorated with paintings. The rooms in the house are for the most part small and low; one can almost always easily touch the ceilings. The size of each is planned out most accurately according to the number of mats which it will take to cover the floor. These mats are of the same size, namely about 72 by 36 inches.<sup>1</sup> The rooms are rectangular and without recesses, save in the guest room, where there are two, called *tokonoma* and *chigaidana*. In the *tokonoma* are hung the *kakémono*, or pictures, and on its floor, which is raised above the rest of the compartment, are placed vases with flowers, an incense burner, a figure of the household god, seal case, etc. In illustration No. 90, where a wedding ceremony is taking place, there are three *kakémono* behind the *chigaidana*, and their appropriateness will be recognised, for they illustrate the hairy-tailed tortoise, cranes, and Jurōjin, all emblems of longevity. As weddings are celebrated at night, lanterns (*shokudai*) are introduced, and the sky outside is painted black; the bride is drinking *saké* from a cup, this being done several times by both parties; the other persons include the parents, and the go-betweens who have arranged the match; all are in full dress (*kamishimo*); before the bride is a wooden pedestal for placing the *saké* cups upon; in front of the two bridesmaids in the foreground are bowls with handles, containing the *saké*, and ornamented with pairs of paper butterflies, emblems of conjugal felicity. It may also be noted that on the cornice in which the *shoji* slide are depicted the *takaramono*, or Precious Things (p. 64); the table in the centre of the room has upon it a representation of the shore of Takasago, with the "pine of mutual old age," and figures of Giotomba, an old man and

<sup>1</sup> A Japanese never if he can avoid it sits without a mat (*tatami* or *gasa*) beneath him. He even carries it with him to picnics, etc.

woman, who are the spirits of the pine, and who brush and rake up the pine needles as they fall with a broom and rake (*takeboko* and *kumodo*) of classic form; the pile of boxes on the left are supposed each to contain a thousand *riō*, the dowry, and are called *senriobako*; the *shōji* are withdrawn so as to open up a view of the street; the artist has adopted a common device for getting over the difficulty of finishing off his ceiling and his foreground by the assistance of clouds.<sup>1</sup> The ebony *kozuka* at the head of this chapter is a delightful skit on the wedding procession at night; the first two rats carry a halberd and lantern, then follows the palanquin, lastly those carrying the trousseau.

The *chigaidana* is used as a receptacle for everything which we should put in a cupboard. As a rule it is fitted at the top with shelves, and below with a cupboard—the former for the reception of the *kakémono* which are not in use, *makemono* or rolls, lacquer boxes, etc., and the latter for stowing away the bedding.

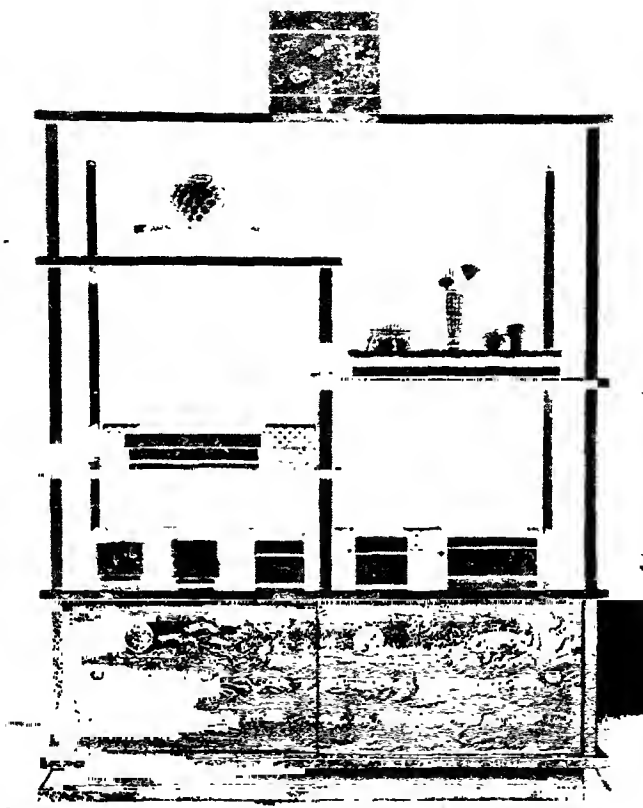
The three historical pieces of furniture (*Hatsun'dana*) which are illustrated in Nos. 91-93 are given partly as specimens of fine lacquer and of the purest forms of furniture, also as showing the variety and uses of these *étageres*. They are historical in that they were given in 1637 by Iyémitsu Tokugawa, the third Shōgun, to his eldest daughter, Ichiyohimé, on her marriage to the Daimyō of Owari. The whole set consisted of those illustrated, a small portable chapel, a book-stand, one for MSS., and articles for toilet, and a library. They were made by Koami Nagashigé, who in the decoration took for his theme scenes out of the *Gengi Monogatari*, which illustrate the First Song of the Birds. He was the tenth of the line of Koami, and died in 1651, aged fifty-three. His family continued to the nineteenth generation in the service of the Shōguns. The pieces are amongst the most remarkable specimens

<sup>1</sup> For a full account of the marriage rite see Mitford's "Tales of Old Japan," p. 364, and for a description of marriage amongst the lower orders the graphic story of "A Woman's Tragedy," Hearn, *Jap. Soc. Trans.*, vi. 127.



of fine lacquer in Japan, and are still in the possession of a member of the Tokugawa family, namely, the Marquis Yoshi Akira.

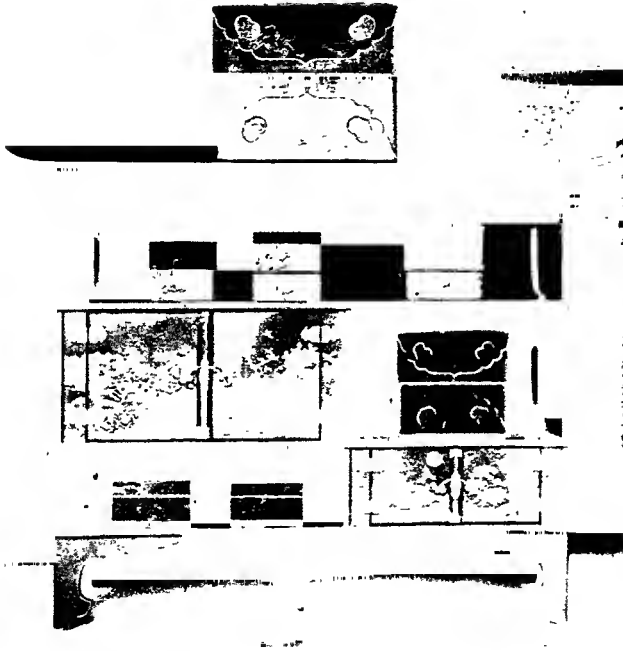
Almost every house has a verandah, which is a necessity



No. 91.—Hatsunédana. *By Koami Nagashig?*

where heavy rain is frequent and the sides of the house are composed of fragile materials. Round this verandah, therefore, wooden screens (*amado*) are placed at night and in the rainy season ; these fixed into grooves slide along.

No expensive paintwork, in feeble imitation of the wood it covers, stands ready to chip and scratch and look shabby. Everything remains as it left the carpenter's plane, usually smoothed but not polished. If the workman thought the bark upon the wood was pretty, he would probably leave even this, and he would certainly make no attempt to

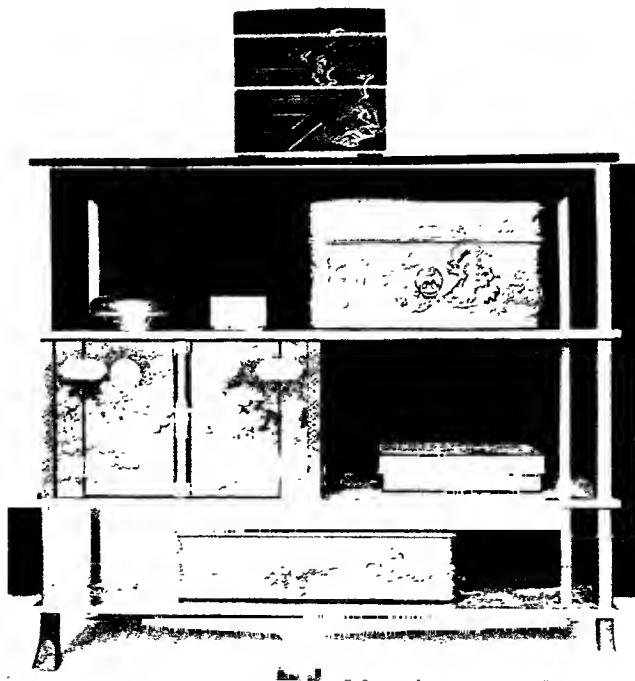


No. 92.—Hatsunédana. By *Koami Nagashige*.

remove any artistic markings caused by the ravages of a worm or larvæ.<sup>1</sup> Our illustration (No. 94) shows a dinner party.

<sup>1</sup> The Japanese even imitate these markings, and upon such incongruous subjects as sword sheaths are pierced through and through to imitate a piece of worm-eaten wood.

Besides the guest room, there was usually in olden times a special room set apart for the *Chanoyu* (hot water for tea) or tea ceremony; this was not always in the building, but usually in one specially built in a specially designed garden. I give from the catalogue of the Ceramic Collection in the Victoria and Albert Museum an account of this



No. 93.—Hatsunédana. *By Koami Nagashige.*

ancient ceremonial, for it has played an important part in the history of the nation, has had much to do with the course of political events, and still more with the rigid observance of rules of etiquette, etc.

Tea first came to Japan not as a beverage but as a medicine brought by Buddhist missionaries about A.D. 800,

and was used by the priests to keep themselves awake during the long periods of reciting the *sutras*; afterwards it was given to the congregations for a like purpose. Hence its use was always accompanied by a certain amount



No. 94.—A Dinner Party.

of ritual; from the religious ceremonial it passed to the luxurious, and then to the æsthetic, and became an excuse for congenial, political, or epicurean meetings.

Two modes of conducting the ceremonies were observed—winter and summer. In the former the garden was

strewn with fir leaves, the guests retained their shoes, and the furnace for the kettle was a pit in the floor filled with ashes. In the latter the garden was decked with flowers, the guests took off their shoes, and a portable earthenware furnace (*furo*) was used.

The inside of the room was usually as plain as possible. The hours fixed for the invitations were 4 to 6 A.M., noon, or 6 P.M. The guests, assembling in a garden pavilion where is a bench (*machi ai*, loin-rester), announce their arrival by striking on a wooden tablet or bell, when the host himself or a servant appears to conduct them into the chamber. The entrance being only two feet square, the host kneels and lets the guests creep in before him. They being seated in a semicircle, the host goes to the door of the kitchen in which the utensils are kept, saying: "I am very glad you have come, and thank you much. I now go to make up the fire." He then brings in a basket (*sumitori*) containing charcoal in pieces of a prescribed length, a brush (*mitsuba*) made of three feathers, a pair of tongs (*hibashi*), the stand of the kettle (*kamashiki*), iron handles for the kettle, a lacquer box<sup>1</sup> containing incense<sup>2</sup> (*kō-bako*), and some paper. He again leaves the chamber to bring in a vessel with ashes (*haiki*) and its spoon. He then makes up the fire and burns incense to overpower the smell of the charcoal. While he is thus occupied, the guests beg to be allowed to inspect the incense box, generally an object of value, which passes from hand to hand, and the last guest returns it to the host.

This closes the first part of the ceremony, and both host and guests withdraw.

The second part commences with eating, and, as it is a rule that nothing should be left, the guests carry off, wrapped up in paper, any fragments that remain. The

<sup>1</sup> This is used in the summer mode. In the winter a porcelain or earthenware box (*kogo*) is employed.

<sup>2</sup> In the winter odoriferous pastilles are burned, in the summer sandalwood.

utensils used in this part of the ceremony are as follows:—

1. An iron kettle (*kama*) with a copper or iron lid, resting on a stand (*kamashiki*). The *kama* often had a rough surface, and was of curious shape.
2. A table or stand (*daisu*) of mulberry wood, two feet high.
3. Two tea-jars (*chairé*) (No. 95), containing *koicha*, thick, or *usucha*, thin, powdered tea enclosed in bags of brocade.
4. A vessel containing fresh water (*mizusashi*).
5. A tea-bowl of porcelain or earthenware (*chawan*, or, when of large size, *temmoku*), simple in form, but remarkable for its antiquity or historical associations.

Besides these, there is a bamboo whisk (*chasen*); a silk cloth (*fukusa*), usually purple, for wiping the utensils; a spoon (*chashaku*), to take the tea out of the *chairé*; and a water-ladle (*shaku*).

After solemn salutations and obeisances the utensils are wiped and some of the powdered tea is placed in the tea-bowl, hot water is poured on it, and the whole is vigorously stirred with the whisk until it looks like thin spinach; a boy then carries the bowl to the chief guest, from whom it passes round the party to the last, who returns it empty to the boy. The empty bowl is then passed round once more that the guests may admire it. The utensils are then washed by the host, and the ceremony ends.

The ceremonial described above is that known as the "*Koicha*" (thick tea), and Dr Funk states that he was present on one of these occasions, when the tea-bowl and water-jar were exhibited with much pride as old Korean; the host dilated on the age and origin of the various utensils, and mentioned, for instance, that the bag of one of the tea-jars was made from the dress of a celebrated dancer who lived in the time of Hidéyoshi.

These ceremonies were the cause of the large prices paid for the vessels of pottery used in them; in the time

of Hidéyoshi, a single tea-bowl of Séto, the most prized ware, was sold for some thousand *yen*; so recently as 1899 a cup of Chinese stoneware with lustrous black glaze and ash-coloured spots fetched 3,000 *yen*.<sup>1</sup> Specimens used to be met with in England together with their old bags and box. The British Museum contains a large number of fine specimens.

The *Binko*, or incense ceremonies, also originated in religion, but was less infected with ceremonial, and consisted mainly in guesswork from the smoke as to the variety.

In the luxurious days ceremonial, not less extraordinary than what we have noted, entered into everything. For instance at a dinner the products of hill and garden were placed at one side of the feast, sea and river on the other: it was unlucky to have wild boar and leveret or salmon and cod in the same *menu*. The number of cups of wine was limited, a favourite number being three times three. In eating, a chopstickful was put in consecutively on the right, left, and centre of the mouth. Further ceremonies are set out by Brinkley, "Japan and China," ii. 113.

From these ceremonies it may be judged by what strict self-imposed rules of etiquette the Japanese have been governed, and how conservative they have been regarding them. The *chanoyu* had its origin, according to Mr Chamberlain, seven hundred years ago, during which time it has passed through three transformations, a medico-religious, a luxurious, and an æsthetic stage. The second of these was in full swing in 1330, and consisted of a ritual so full of extravagances that vast fortunes were dissipated in its service. It was under the sway of Hidéyoshi in 1594 that a code of rules was formulated for its observance, against which there was no appeal; it inculcated morality, good-fellowship, politeness, social equality, simplicity, and the worship of the antique in objects of Art. "The members of the association were," as Mr

<sup>1</sup> A *yen* = 2s. 0582d.; 10 *rin* = 1 *sen*, rather less than  $\frac{1}{4}$ d.: 100 *sen* = 1 *yen*.

Anderson says, "the critics and connoisseurs, whose dicta consecrated or condemned the labours of artist or author, and established canons of taste, to which all works, to be successful in their generation, must conform." The *séances* constituted symposia in which abstruse questions of philosophy, literature, and art were discussed from the standpoint of acknowledged authority. The objects used in the ceremony often find a place in Art—see for instance the *chairé* with its case, the teaspoon *chashaku* on the *suzuribako*, No. 171.<sup>1</sup>

Japanese intercourse in the home was not, however, all ceremony but consisted in a large measure of amusements which may be termed frivolous, although in judging of these one must not lose sight of the fact that house room was usually restricted, that ladies did not go out much, and that physical exertion for pleasure was not in the past considered good form amongst the upper classes. Consequently the pastimes indulged in were for the most part capable of being performed by a restricted number, of a



No. 95.—Sétō Chairé. Sixteenth Century.

graceful character, being mainly tests of memory and in no way lent themselves to feats of strength. Those which find most frequent expression in Art are the flower card game (*hana gatuta*) where cards with flowers and birds and poetry appropriate to each month of the year had to be

<sup>1</sup> For further information see the "Chanoyu," Harding Smith, *Jap. Soc. Trans.*, v. 42.



matched ; the perfume game *Kōawase* where the ashes of scented woods had to be guessed. An out-of-door pastime often depicted in Art is the fan and cup game in which one or other was floated down stream and a verse of poetry had to be composed before it touched the bank. Firefly hunting (Plate I.) and kite flying were great favourites even amongst grown ups.

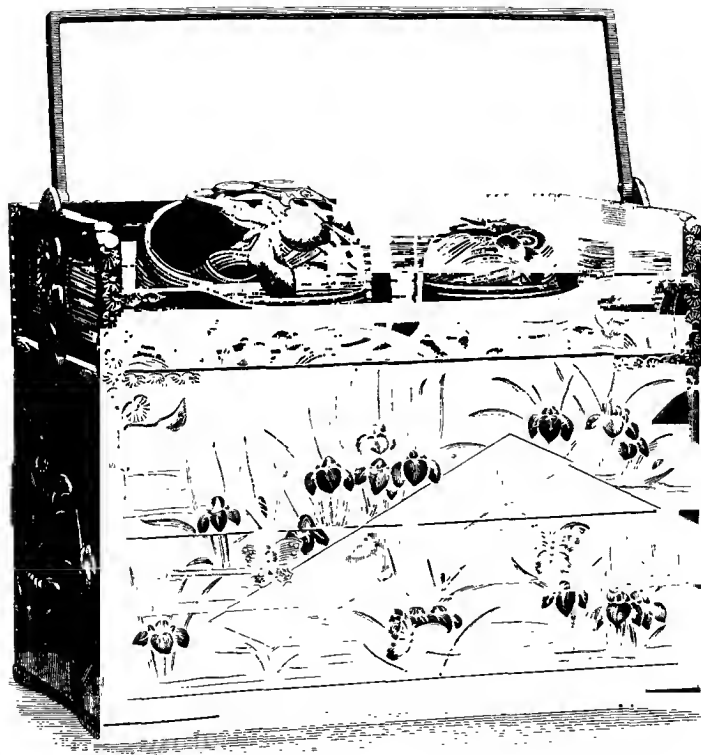
Persons in Japan who wish to start housekeeping are saved one great expense, namely, furnishing. No carpets, tables, bedsteads, wardrobes, or cupboards find a place in their requirements. Nor does the Japanese need chairs, for he is only comfortable when resting on his knees and heels on a cushion (*zabuton*) ; and he must have his *hibachi*, or fire vessel, and his *tobakobon*, or tobacco-tray. The *hibachi* is a portable fireplace, which throws out a slight heat, and also serves as a source whence to light the pipe. It contains small pieces of charcoal. According to the exhaustive work of Professor Morse on "Japanese Homes," whenever a caller comes, the first act of hospitality, whether in winter or summer, is to place the *hibachi* before him. Even in shops it is brought in and placed on a mat when a customer enters. At a winter party one is assigned to each guest, and the place where each is to sit is indicated by a square cloth cushion. Our illustration of the *tobakobon* is from a specimen in natural wood, inlaid with irises in tortoise-shell, mother-of-pearl, and ivory ; the mountings are in repoussé silver ; eighteenth-century work, of the school of Yōyusai. In common with the other pieces of household furniture given here, it is of superior workmanship, and similar objects would only be found in the houses of the well-to-do. The *tobakobon* is also handed to a visitor ; it contains a small earthen jar for holding charcoal. The baskets used for holding the charcoal for the *hibachi* and *tobakobon* are often very artistically made. The only other articles of furniture will be the *kotatsu*, a square wooden frame, which in winter is placed over the *hibachi* or stove, and is covered with large wadded quilts or *futon* (under which the whole family



THE RETURN FROM SHOPPING. By Okunura Ma-inobu.



huddle for warmth), the pillow (*makura*), and the lantern (*andon*) which feebly illumines the apartment. No Japanese would think of sleeping without having this burning throughout the night. All houses were until lately lit at night by lanterns, but now paraffin lamps are rapidly driving them out. Owing to the frequent visitation of fire,



No. 96.—Lacquer Tokakobon.

to which Japanese towns and villages are subject, almost every house of any importance possesses a *kura*, or godown, a fireproof isolated building, in which valuables are kept.

The consumption of lanterns in Japan is enormous, without counting the export trade. Every house has dozens for internal use and for going out at night. These latter are

placed in a rack in the hall; each bears the owner's name in Chinese characters, or his badge in red or black on a



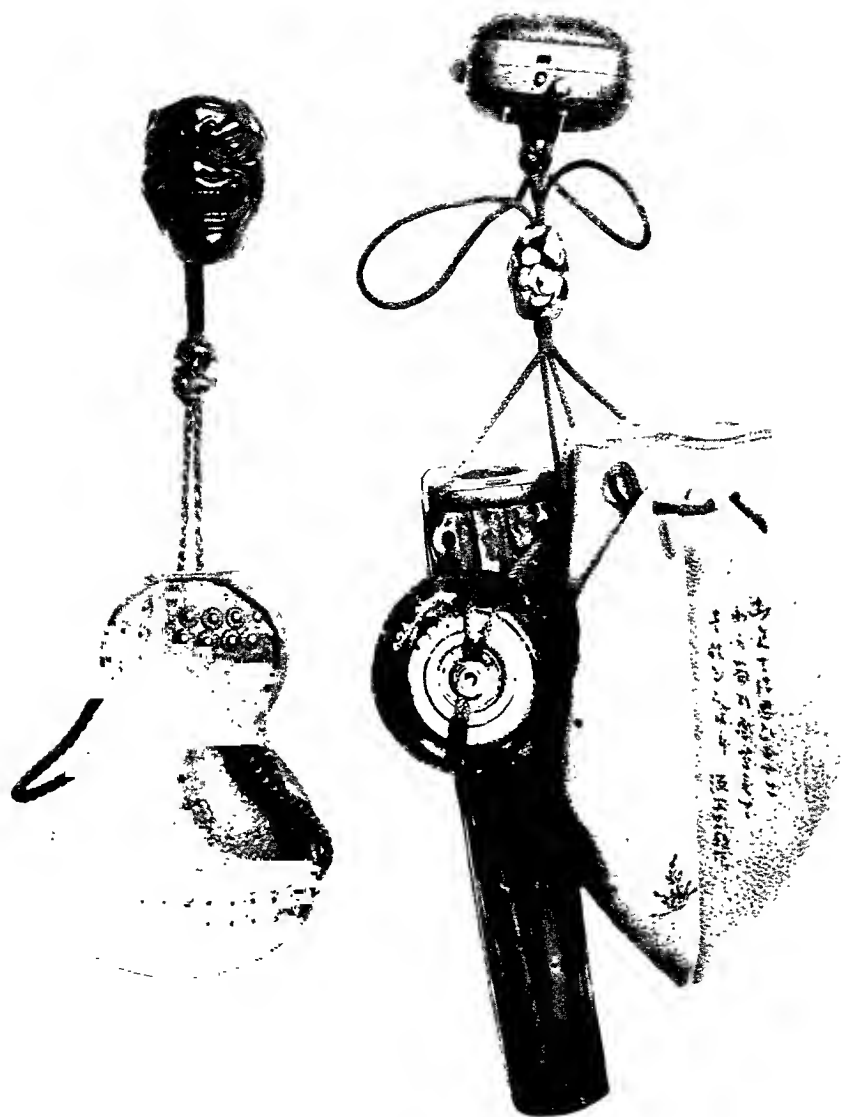
No. 97. — The Bathers.

white ground. One burns outside most houses and shops, and every foot-passenger carries one. No festival is complete without thousands of them.

A trait that commends itself to all Englishmen is the love of personal cleanliness shown by frequent bathing not always carried on in the privacy of the chamber. Our illustration (No. 97) shows that swimming is a pastime that is enjoyed.

Smoking is an universal habit. It begins, interrupts, and ends the day. When pipes are used they are very small in the bowl, and only hold sufficient tobacco for three or four whiffs; these are swallowed and expelled through the nostrils. In consequence of their tiny capacity they are often taken for opium pipes, the smoking of which is forbidden. Upon them and the tobacco-pouch artists bestowed much skill (No. 98).

Many, perhaps the majority, of the objects which come to Europe are utensils for food; it may, therefore, be interesting to describe a meal in a well-to-do house. Each person is served separately on a small table or tray. For his solid food he uses chopsticks (*hashi*), but his soup he drinks from a small lacquered bowl. Upon his table will be found a small porcelain bowl of rice, and dishes upon which are relishes of fish, etc.; a teapot, for the contents of which a saucer instead of a cup is used. The stimulants will be either tea (*cha*) or rice beer (*saké*). The tea is native green, and no milk or sugar is used; it is drunk on every possible occasion, and is even served when one visits a shop. The tea apparatus (*châ dôgu*) is always in readiness in the living-room, viz., a brazier with live coals (*hibachi*), tray (*bon*), teapot (*dobin* or *chabin*), cups (*chawan*), and a tea-caddy (*chairi*). So, too, a labourer going to work carries with him a *bentobako* of lacquered wood for his rice, a kettle, a tea-caddy, a teapot, a cup, and chopsticks. The *saké* contains a certain amount of fusel oil, and is intoxicating; it is usually drunk warm from *saké* cups, which may be either of lacquer or porcelain. Ceremonial attaches even to *saké* drinking: for instance, at the New Year the colour of the cup is red, at the boys' fête the *saké* is seasoned with iris petals. Bread is seldom used, rice being the principal starch food; a servant kneels near by at meals with a large



Tobacco Pouch, made from  
piece of chain armour.

No. 98.

Tobacco and Pipe Case, and Netsuké containing  
flint and steel.

panful, and replenishes the bowls as they are held out to her; it is eaten at almost every repast, the only substitute being groats made out of millet, barley, or wheat. Rice is also made up into dumplings for certain ceremonials especially the New Year: it is then formed in the shape of Uzumé's mirror and is known as *kagami mochi* or "mirror dumpling"; it is also termed *hagatamé* or "teeth strengthener." They are eaten with much ceremonial and song on the fourth day of the New Year. On the eleventh *mochi* used to be offered by the *samurai* to his armour, and on the eleventh by ladies to their mirror.

Favourite edibles are gigantic radishes (*daikon*), which frequently figure in Art, lotus roots, young bamboo shoots, cucumbers, of which a single person will often consume three or four a day;<sup>1</sup> so, too, the dark violet fruit of the egg plant, and mushrooms (the subject of frequent illustration) are eaten at almost every meal. With fruits Japan is sparsely supplied; the grapes, peaches, pears, and walnuts will not compare with western specimens, but the persimmon, with which the ape is always associated, and which is always cropping up in fairy stories, a brilliant orange-coloured fruit, the size of an apple, is common enough; the tree grows to a large size, and holds its fruit in the autumn even after it has lost its leaves.

The wife used to eat separately from her husband, in another room with the rest of the females.

No notice of the contents of a Japanese house would be complete without some reference to the incense-burners (*koro*) which find a place there, and also in the Buddhist temples. Their manufacture afforded employment for a large number of artists in bronze.

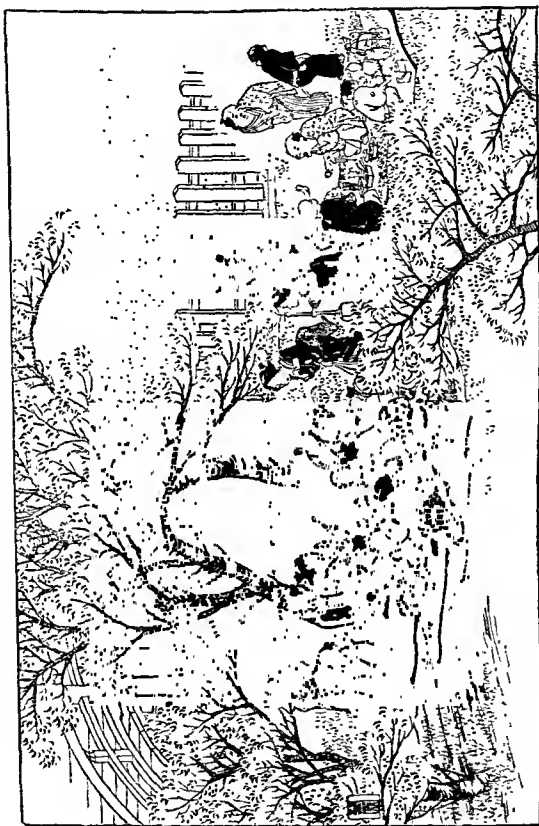
An article which is in use in most houses and shops and is constantly depicted in Art, is the *soroban*, a frame enclosing rows of balls moving on wires by which accounts and calculations are made. Other articles frequently drawn are besoms and rakes. In this respect the Japanese is a

<sup>1</sup> From these and from gourds are made the hour-glass shaped *sake* bottles, which so often find a place in pictures.



wonderful scavenger, as every evening there is a universal sweeping up of the house fronts. Hokusai is very fond of drawing persons sweeping, especially falling maple leaves.

Picnicking is a favourite outdoor amusement, and is indulged in by all classes and at all seasons of the year.



No. 99.---Picnicking.

At stated times the roads leading from the large towns are thronged with animated and joyous crowds proceeding to some favourite haunt. In No. 99 is a party which have made cherry blossoming an excuse for a picnic. At such outings each used to vie with the other in the beauty

of the workmanship and art which had been expended upon his lacquer picnic set (*bentobako*) or his *saki* jar. At the Burty sale one of these sets sold for nearly £500. An illustration is given of one belonging to Mr Wm. C. Alexander (p. 136). To these entertainments mats for sitting on, low screens for flirting<sup>1</sup> behind, *tobakobon*, and other objects are also carried. The ladies bring their musical instruments, and songs are sung and poetry improvised.

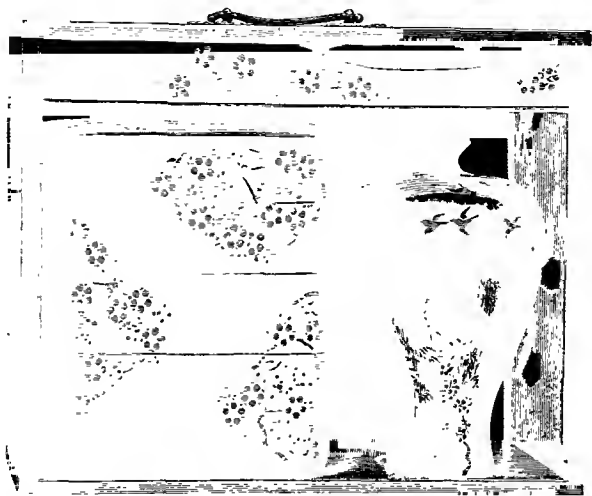
The excuses for picnicking are many and various. For instance, upon a certain day in January all the world sallies forth to gather seven different kinds of grasses, which upon the return home are made into a salad, and nowadays we read of excursions by railway to view the cherry trees at Koganei, many thousand lovers of nature travelling from Tōkyō in a day to that historical spot. Picnics for shell gathering in the Bay of Tōkyō are also popular. April and October are the principal months for picnics.

No recreation claims a larger place in Art than that of the stage, and perhaps nothing is so incomprehensible to us over here as the gorgeously coloured, overdressed, and exaggerated posture groups which illustrate the drama; these form a large percentage of the subjects of the coloured prints that come to England, and for the most part they take but an inferior place in the Art of Japan.

Space will not allow of my dwelling upon the subject further here than to point out that the drama in Japan was in the past divided into two very distinct parts. The religious *no*, a cultured form, understood by and confined in its representation almost exclusively to the cultured class. Its actors were either taken from the nobility or from a trained body who held knightly rank. Anciently it was divided into three sections, the first to propitiate the gods, the second to terrify those evilly disposed, the third to illustrate all that was fair and beautiful. In illustrations

<sup>1</sup> Flirtation is practised by a wave of the right hand palm downwards, or by waving the right sleeve. Kissing is unknown, as is shaking hands.

its representations may generally be recognised by the performers wearing masks. The ordinary drama was confined to the lower classes, *samurai* not being allowed to witness it, and was a welcome relaxation from stretches of toil that had no Sunday break at each week end. It has been too often described to need repetition here.<sup>1</sup> Its actors were classed as rogues and vagabonds. One of the most beautiful performances in Japan is that held in Kyōto in April of each year, the *Miyako Odori*, performed by the



No. 100.—Bentobako. *Eighteenth Century.* (Alexander Collection.)

fairest of all the geisha, the themes being generally selected from the *Isé Monogatari*.

A Japanese, too, is very fond of spending his time at the tea-house, a sort of restaurant of which there is one or more in every town. They are situated whenever practicable on the most picturesque spots, and many with their gardens, etc., are famed for their views, notably those in

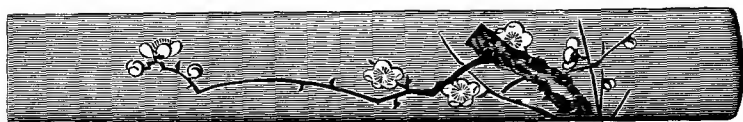
<sup>1</sup> See "Japanese Theatres," Edwards, *Jap. Soc. Trans.*, v. 142 ; "Pastimes and amusements of the Japanese," Salway, *Jap. Soc. Trans.*, v. 88.

the neighbourhood of Lake Biwa. These find a place over and over again in illustrations. Geisha are an invariable accompaniment of the *saké* which is consumed and which they serve. These damsels have no counterpart outside Japan, and fill such a place in certain phases of Japanese life that they cannot be dismissed in a single line. What better description of them can be given than Captain Brinkley's: "A girl exquisitely refined in all her ways; her costume a *chef-d'œuvre* of decorative art; her looks demure yet arch; her manners restful and self-contained, yet sunny and winsome; her movements gentle and unobtrusive, but musically graceful; her conversation a piquant mixture of feminine inconsequence and sparkling repartee; her list of light accomplishments inexhaustible; her subjective modesty a model, and her objective complacency unmeasured." The pay of a geisha is indeed typical of the ceremony which permeates all Japanese life. For "one stick," meaning the time occupied in the burning of a stick of incense, the tariff is 25 *sen* (sixpence), but in addition she receives the "honourable congratulations" (*o shūgi*), which is never less than a *yen*.

The Japanese are not musical, and the art is almost entirely confined to the fair sex, who principally use the *koto*, a thirteen-stringed harp, and *samisen* with three strings.<sup>1</sup>

Every Japanese is fond of pets, whether in the shape of birds, dogs, cats, ducks, chickens, or fish. What delightful animals the dogs are may be seen in the picture by Rosetsu (p. 172).

<sup>1</sup> "Japanese Music," Bevan, *Jap. Soc. Trans.*, v. 312.



No. 101.—Ume Blossom. *From a Kozuka.*

## CHAPTER IX FLOWERS AND FESTIVALS

“When winter turns to spring,  
Birds that were songless make their songs resound,  
Flowers that were flowerless cover all the ground ;

Yet 'tis no perfect thing :—  
I cannot walk, so tangled is each hill ;  
So thick the herbs, I cannot pluck my fill.

But in the autumn tide  
I cull the scarlet leaves and love them dear,  
And bid the green leaves stay, with many a tear,

All on the fair hillside :—  
No time so sweet as that. Away ! away !  
Autumn's the time I fain would keep away.”

—OHOGIMI, *Seventh Century.*



**I**F there is one trait that marks  
taste and refinement in a  
people it is a love for nature  
and the beauties which adorn it.

In Europe this cult has advanced  
simultaneously with civilisation, but only within the last  
century has it permeated downwards and affected all classes.

But poets, painters, and the aristocracy of China and  
Japan enjoyed nature long before ours thought of it, as the  
lines at the head of this chapter and the following trans-  
lation from a very ancient poem show :—<sup>1</sup>

“Should the mountain cherry cease,  
In the spring-time of the year,  
With its mass of new-born bloom,  
Us poor mortal men to cheer,  
Then would heart of spring be doomed  
And its brightness fade away.”

<sup>1</sup> Japanese poems usually consist of verselets of thirty-one syllables,  
arranged in lines thus—5, 7, 5, 7, 7.

In the *Genji Monogatari*, a romance written in the tenth century (to which we have already referred), we often find the hero, Prince Genji, in ecstasy over the landscape. For instance, as his gaze over the trees falls on the far-off capital, enveloped in haze as dusk sets in, he exclaims, "What a lovely landscape! The people to whom such scenery is familiar are perhaps happy and contented." "Nay," replied his attendants; "but were you to see the beautiful mountain ranges and the sea coast the picture would indeed be found lovely." During his exile "he sketched every beautiful landscape in the neighbourhood." In olden days it was the custom to keep silence in the presence of flowers, and they were out of place where talking or amusements were going on.

Although Japan originally received its education in landscape Art and love for the picturesque in nature from the Chinese, and these were fostered by the teachings of the Buddhist religion, they have undoubtedly been for ages innate in the nation. In the British Museum may be seen pictures dating from the eleventh century in which herbage and rock are drawn so correctly that their species can be identified. Chinese influence was in reality a restraining element, compelling the Japanese artist to look at nature in a false way, and depict its forms in a manner entirely inconsistent with its aspect as presented to him. He had to turn his back on nature and create a world of frowning rocks and Chinese pagodas entirely unlike anything Japanese. Precepts, until within the last century or so, prevented his taking up a flower, a bamboo shoot, or a bird, and copying it; he was obliged to draw it in a certain manner laid down for him in remote ages, and embodied in manuals whose authority he dare not question. Those who have watched Japanese artists in the London exhibitions will remember the manner in which they drew. Their paper was divided up into squares which they had to fill in regular rotation, and their design was elaborated either out of a copybook or from memory.

It must never be forgotten that the educated Japanese



No. 102. - Tropical Vegetation and Rain. By Hokusai.

places a fine specimen of calligraphy higher than a good painting. A single word written by a good calligraphist may exceed in value a painting by an artist of equal fame.<sup>1</sup> It is on this account that on metal-work, lacquer, and porcelain we find so many imitations of brush-work. In looking through a collection of metal-work, an intelligent Japanese often prefers incised to relief work, and the signature at the back to the work on the front. It is quite curious to notice his enthusiasm over a finely engraved signature. From this it is easy to understand that in a large proportion of cases fidelity to nature is of small account compared with technical skill in handling. An instance of this occurs in the criticism of Shuzan (translated, "Pictorial Arts of Japan," p. 186;), who wrote in 1777, shortly after a section of artists had begun to look at nature: "Amongst pictures is a kind called naturalistic, in which it is considered proper that flowers, grasses, fishes, insects, etc., should bear exact resemblance to nature. This is a special style and must not be depreciated, but as its object is merely to show the form, neglecting the rules of Art, it is commonplace and without taste. In ancient pictures the study of the art of outline and of the laws of taste were respected without attention to close imitation to form." On the other hand, in the *Genji Monogatari* there is a long and enthusiastic eulogy of pictures taken direct from nature.

But if the artist is averse even now to studying nature to the extent he might, that pursuit is undertaken by a large section of the nation, prominent amongst which are the botanists and herbalists, who for centuries have been noted for their knowledge of the floral and vegetable kingdom, and who enjoy, in common with the Chinese, the distinction of having the most elaborate and oldest vegetable nomenclature in the world. This is hardly to be

<sup>1</sup> There are two styles of script, "*Katakana*" and "*Hiragana*," which are entirely distinct: both are derived from characters, the first being angular the other more flowing and intricate.



wondered at, for their country is the most interesting one in that respect outside the tropics.

Captious critics insist that even now the Japanese do not draw trees and flowers accurately. Even one so generous as the late Dr Anderson considered that their representation was distinguished by graceful composition and harmonious colouring rather than by botanical correctness. To the ordinary admirer of Japanese Art this will come as a surprise; he, like myself, will probably rest satisfied with the repast which has been spread before him, and will refuse to let his enjoyment be lessened because each petal does not always conform in drawing to accurately defined rules of perspective or is not relieved from its fellow by perfect chiaroscuro.

Flowers are associated with every act of a Japanese's life: they herald his birth, they are his daily companions, they accompany him to the grave; and after that they serve as a link between him and those he has left, for his relatives and friends do not rest satisfied after piling his coffin with floral tributes, but show their remembrance by offerings for long years afterwards.

I noted a touching instance in a Japanese newspaper of the poetical sentiments with regard to nature which apparently permeate all classes. A young girl, a *jōrō*, committed suicide because her position was unbearable. She left a letter to the owners of the house where she had been to all intents a slave, in which occurred this sentence: "*From under the shadow of the grasses I will send my gratitude to you.*"

No home, however humble, is complete without its vase of flowers:<sup>1</sup> in the wealthier ones the vase is of porcelain or metal, in the cottage it is often merely a bamboo shoot. The flower markets (No. 103) are thronged by all classes, and hawkers parade the streets with them. The altars, too, of the temples are almost invariably adorned with flowers.

The arrangement of flowers has its literature and

<sup>1</sup> "Unlike its population, the country never lets itself be seen naked!"—*Sir R. Alcock*.



No. 103.—Bonichi, or Market Day. From the "Toto Saiziki."

professors, who have laid down regular codes, which extend even to the composition of bouquets, the number of flowers, the proportion of leaf to flowers, the contrast of colours between the flowers and the receptacle in which they are placed. Five centuries ago the greatest artist of the age did not consider it derogatory to furnish designs for the guidance of ladies in the practice of this offshoot of decorative art, which like much else is of Chinese origin. Within the last decade or so the English people have had this cult, in which form takes precedence of colour, brought to their notice in many ways, but it is hardly likely that a fashion in which a simple curve is to be preferred to the loveliest hue of a rose, in which the most artistic arrangement may contain no flower at all, will supplant our old ideas. Yet undoubtedly here as elsewhere there is much to be gained, and I can commend the study to all who have time and a garden replete with material at their disposal. Flower arrangement formed a considerable item in the *chanoyu* (p. 122).

The gardens attached to almost every house are illustrations of the motto, *multum in parvo*. As a rule they are not for use, but for ornament, and are laid out under the most exacting rules which originated in the priests' laying out of the Temple gardens; they consequently became the authorities on planning, which is founded on moods and emotions rather than geometry. The landscape artist need not travel beyond his garden for much of the material with which he illustrates his work. Dwarf pine groves, tiny bamboos, a miniature rice-field and meadow, each no bigger than a chess-board, a pebbled stream, a lakelet stocked with carp, gold fish and tortoises, lotus flowers, iris and flowering reeds; even a puny bridge, waterfall, and tiny mountains a few feet high are present. Rocks are considered a *sine quâ non*, and as an instance of this it may be mentioned that at Tōkyō, where no suitable material can be found, they are transported from a distance of fifty miles; there are regular dealers in rocks, and rare shapes and colours cost £20 apiece: books, too, are written which

treat of the proper positions in the garden which should be assigned to them, and they have five radical shapes with ninety-one sub-divisions, such as hill, valley, lake, water-fowl feather drying stones. Legends are frequently carved upon them, as for instance : "The sight of the plum bloom causes the ink to flow in the writing-room." Stone lanterns (*ishidōrō*) are a feature, the larger ones resembling pagodas, the smaller ones mushrooms. They also line the approaches to the temples, to which they have been presented as votive offerings (No. 37). A garden which is large enough has a rustic summer-house, over which vines are trained ; it is placed, whenever feasible, where a good view can be obtained. A Japanese will sometimes take all his garden away with him if he changes his dwelling. In contradiction of all this it is, however, asserted that only a small minority care for flowers sufficiently to cultivate them, and that this is left to the government, the priests, and the market gardeners. Reference has already been made to the fondness of the Japanese for the picturesque in nature ; in olden times almost every nobleman's house had its "Chamber of the Inspiring View," whence the best outlook could be obtained, and rooms, and even houses, were named after flowers, as the "Kiri," "Wisteria," the "Villa of Falling Flowers" ;<sup>1</sup> the banks of Lake Biwa were studded with arbours or booths, and thither poets and authors retired to compose the classics of the country. The porcelain garden seats which are imported here were originally designed for use in these arbours. The importance attached to gardens may be estimated by the volumes which have been written about them. One of the most notable is Shunchosai's *Miyako-Riusen-Meisho* where the gardens of Kyōto are illustrated in six volumes.

No notice of gardens would be complete without mention of the dwarfed trees, upon which horticultural sorcery has been carried to its extremest limits. Professor Morse mentions seeing a blackened, distorted, and ap-

<sup>1</sup> So, too, the names of women, as the Princess-Blossoming-Brightly-Like-The-Flowers-Of-The-Trees.

parently dead stick, which quickly sent out long, delicate, drooping twigs soon to be covered with a wealth of beautiful rosy plum blossoms; also a pine tree not 2 feet in height, and with a flattened top 20 feet in circumference. Siebold, in 1826, saw a full-grown oak which could be covered with the hand, lime trees in full bloom, yet not more than 3 inches high, and bamboos and pines of even smaller size. On the other hand, the gardener prides himself on the enormous dimensions to which he can increase his flowers by careful selection, the variation he can effect



No. 104.—Pruning the Pine Tree. *From Banrezki.*

in their leaves and petals, and the freaks of nature he can bring about. These are the result of long-continued hereditary skill, this occupation usually passing from father to son. No. 104 shows a gentleman (distinguishable by his sword) pruning a pine tree. It will be noted how daintily he handles his scissors: delicacy of touch is one of the traits of the race, as it is of other orientals, and has much to do with their deftness in dealing with the frailest and minutest metal-work, carving, or embroidery. No. 105 is from a volume which treats of nothing but

miniature gardens, each of which represents a different view on the Tōkaidō road.

Since the last edition of this book was published these dwarf trees have been largely introduced into England, sales by auction being frequently held of imported specimens. The writer's experience of attempting to acclimatise them to a London house has not been encouraging. The dwarf cedars (*Thuja obtusa*), it is true, have lived now for more than a year, after passing most of the winter, at some cost, in a florist's conservatory, but the poor things have never looked happy, and a tree which excites commiseration rather than pleasure is not a fitting companion of the home. For those, however, whose temperaments are otherwise disposed the following cultural instructions may be of use to the owner, and of service to the tree.

DWARF CEDAR (*Thuja obtusa*).—Quite hardy if proper care is taken; best kept out of doors the whole year round, but can be kept in a cool conservatory during the winter months without harm. Will live in a well-ventilated London house during the summer months, but with freedom from gas. Should be sent into the country for the winter. Leaves should be syringed night and morning in hot weather, and in spring and summer water should be given two or three times a day, until it runs through the base of the pot. In winter, much less water is required. If the tree is plunged in the open air in ashes or fibre for the winter, the ball should be thoroughly moistened before plunging, and the tree would not then require to be watered till taken out in the spring. Once in three years trees should be taken out of their pots, and the ball pruned back by 1 inch all round with a sharp knife, the tree should then be replaced in the same pot with fresh earth (Surrey loam) mixed with about one teaspoonful of bone meal to every gallon of loam.

DWARF LARCH (*Larix*).—Perfectly hardy and will live all the year round in the open air. Can also be used as table plants, but should not be kept permanently in a London house.

FAN PALM (*Chamærops*).—Will live out of doors all the year round in a sheltered spot. Will also do well in a London house if the leaves are kept clean by being sponged with water.

DOUBLE CHERRY (*Prunus pseudo-cerasus*).—Should be kept in full sunshine all the summer, and the pots plunged in ashes on the south side of a wall during the winter. Should be pinched back in the same way as is done in the case of fruit trees.

PIGMY BAMBOOS.—In late autumn, pigmy bamboos should be cut down to within an inch of the ground; fresh green shoots will then spring up in the spring, and the bamboo will thus keep its dwarf character.

The reader will by this time be quite prepared for the information that Japan is perhaps more noteworthy for its flora than for anything else. Mr Chamberlain, in "Things Japanese," says that it must excite the imagination of the man of science as much as Japanese works of Art excite the man of taste. The number of known species of trees and plants (exclusive of mosses and low organisms) totals 2,743.

The varied and exceptional climatic conditions of Japan naturally affect its flora considerably. Consequently we find in Art, often in the same picture, almost incomprehensible incongruities; as, for instance, the palm and the bamboo side by side with the pine tree and the oak of northern regions, and the same thing in the animal kingdom, as, for instance, the bear and the ape. This is no exaggeration, for in short distances one passes from almost tropical growths at sea-level to alpine vegetation round snow limits. I noted in my first chapter that Japan has been described as a veritable country of flowers, and that in hedge, orchard, and garden they abound. I may here add Rein's testimony to what it is like beyond the limits of cultivation. "Before reaching the woodland," he says, "lies a sort of prairie; this is usually a living mosaic of flowers, and is called by the Japanese 'the great flower field.' Here may be recognised many an English wild

flower, oddly associated with many of our garden adornments and numerous complete strangers; for instance, violets, milkwort, pimpernel, blue scabious, bluebells, common bright-eye, bugle, sorrel, hart's tongue, toad flax,



No. 105.—Miniature Garden representing Hara, one of the posting places on the great Tōkaidō road.

osmunda, orchids—mingled with these will be lilies of varied descriptions, with great white, blue, and yellow flowers, the *Pyrus japonica*, azaleas, deutzias, wild roses, and lilies of the valley."



The forests which cover vast tracts of the mountainous parts of the country are not less remarkable for their wealth of floral beauty, and this not only from the differing species of trees but from the growth of climbing plants which cover them and the ground. Any one who will take the trouble to look at the labels attached to most of the flowering trees in our Kensington Gardens will remark how many have been imported from Japan. Rein states that "early in June nearly a hundred kinds of tree and seventy shrubs may be found in flower on many of the mountain slopes."

Deciduous trees are the exception, and this must be borne in mind when considering representations of winter landscape.

Any one who has studied the Japanese artist's delineations of trees must have remarked his fondness for girdling them with creepers, and how he revels in the portrayal of their elegant curves and flowing lines; especially is this noticeable in metal-work, where various coloured metals and pliable wire-work afford scope for their successful rendering. An especial favourite is the hydrangea, which attains to a height of from 20 to 30 feet and in summer is covered with white flowers. The wisteria (*Fuji*) with its flowers is also found on lacquer, ivory, and metal-work; it is as common as our bramble, and the sprays of its flowers often exceed 3 feet in length, whilst a hundred persons may rest under its shadow, and its stem grows to the thickness of a man's body, its branches being used as cables, and its leaves for making fine paper. Its coming in with spring typifies youth. It is a frequent motive in family badges.

The bamboo (*také*), from lending itself so readily to dexterous treatment with the brush, is a prime favourite. As a tender shoot with its feathered head, as a tall, green, polished, full-grown tree, as a shrivelled, frost-bitten reed, it is repeated again and again. Nothing so assists the artist to show the state of the weather: it droops in the hot air, it flutters with the zephyr, it bends under the breeze, it bows

its thousand pennons beneath the typhoon. It is the abiding place of animals birds, and butterflies ; even the tiger is supposed to hide in its brakes from his enemies ; it is associated with the sparrow, because both are of a "gentle and timid nature" ; it typifies just judgment, noble heart, and devotedness, and is emblematic of long life ; it attains



No. 106.—Lacquer Suzuribako. Bamboo. Peasant's Mattock and Hat.

to an age numbered by hundreds of years. It is also a necessity to the Japanese's existence, being used for everything—houses, hedges, bridges, boats, carriages, conduits, vases, mats, baskets, fans, umbrellas, pipe-cases, tobacco jars ; in fact, every article of household use and ornament. As to this, see Mr Holme's paper, *Trans. Japan Society*, vol. i. 23, and his collection of bamboo articles now at Kew.

Many personal and family names are taken from it. There is also a ground bamboo (*sasa*), a common weed, which is used in *mon*.

The willow (*yanagi*) is the subject of many legends: it is found in conjunction with the swallow, owing to both having a wavy and swaying motion, and is emblematic of *jujitsu*, the yielding art of self-defence, in which success is attained by giving way rather than by strength.

The pine (*matsu*) is met with in large quantities throughout Japan, and consequently constantly recurs in landscape Art; but it is also introduced as it typifies prosperity, longevity when in conjunction with the tortoise, crane, plum, and bamboo; and ripe old age when accompanied by snow. *Fukusa*, on which it is embroidered in company with the crane, are for presentation to the newly born.

The *Hinoki*, a conifer (*Chamacyparis obtusa*), is used most extensively as the foundation upon which lacquer is laid.

The plum (*Prunus*, Jap. *umi*) is one of the prime favourites, its gnarled, age-worn appearance contrasting with its pearly flowers that come before the leaves (Nos. 101 and 107). Hence we have many allegories of hope, vigour, and fortune, appearing as it does at the close of winter and commencement of spring. Poets sing its praises, and the artist delights in it, for it assures him that sketching time is at hand.

"Ice-flakes are falling fast  
Through the chilly air, and now  
Yonder trees with snow-bloom laden  
Do assume the wild plum's guise,  
With their mass of snowy flowers  
Gladdening winter's dreary time."

*Umi-take-matsu*—the plum blossom, bamboo, and pine



No. 107.—  
Plum and  
Flowering  
Rush. From  
a *Kozuka*.

—fragrant, green, and everlasting, are the emblems of longevity. The plum blossom is often drawn athwart the moon, symbolic, but of what I do not know; it is also associated with the nightingale. Siebold mentions that it has been cultivated to yield flowers of every shade from white to red, and even yellow and green, and, of course, single and double. Its scent is delicious; the most famous orchards in Japan are at Tsukigase, north-east of Nara.

The Japanese cherry (*Sakura*) is, according to botanists, falsely so called; they term it *Prunus pseudo-cerasus*. Its fruit is very indif-



No. 108. — Birds and Flowers.  
Colour print by Hokusai.

ferent, but as it is almost entirely cultivated for its flower this does not matter. It is preferred by the Japanese to the plum, because it is a true native of Japan, not an importation from China, as is the plum. Both it and the plum tree grow wild, and excursions take place (see No. 112, in the spring<sup>1</sup> to the mountains to see it in its beauty, when, as the old poet sings :—

“The dark massed shades are flecked  
By the mountain cherry's bloom.”

<sup>1</sup> In Tōkyō it is at its finest about the 10th April. The most famous spots for this cherry viewing are Yoshino in Yamato, and Arashiyama, near Kyōto.

And the poet Motoori says: "If one should inquire of you concerning the spirit of a true Japanese, point to the wild cherry blossom shining in the sun." In the *Chiushingura* we read of one Rikiya bringing a basketful of rare eight and nine fold wild cherry blossoms to cheer his lord.<sup>1</sup> It also grows single and double.



No. 109.—  
Cherry  
Blossom.  
From a  
*Kōzuka*.

The peach tree (*momo*) is used in Art much seldomer than either of the foregoing, although it is emblematic of longevity; it is a great favourite in China, and grows everywhere magnificently.

One would have imagined, seeing that such endless streams of "hawthorn" china came from the Middle Kingdom, that this tree was especially favoured by artists. But the truth is that the European<sup>2</sup> does not discriminate between the varieties of flower. So-called "hawthorn" is plum blossom, and the design upon the jars is said to be derived from a pattern made by blossoms fallen upon ice. For the assistance of my readers I give illustrations of the flowers of the *Prunus* and cherry, by which it will be seen that the petals of the latter are indented at their points (Nos. 101 and 109).

The peach tree is often coupled with oxen. There is a Chinese saying, "Turn the horse on to the flower-covered mountain, and the ox into the peach orchard."

The large white blossom of the wild mulberry is also noticeable; but to give a complete list of the flowers which find a place on Japanese wares would require a volume. One can only touch upon those that oftenest occur, either portrayed in their natural form or conventionalised into ornament;

<sup>1</sup> The wood-sorrel (*katabami*) must not be confounded with the cherry flower: it has only three or four petals.

<sup>2</sup> The American terms it incorrectly "peach bloom."

it is some knowledge of this latter department that foreign designers should endeavour to learn, for at present, in their ignorance, they seize hold of a conventionalised flower, and alter and adapt it until it loses individuality, beauty, and meaning.

The flower of flowers in Japan is the *kiku* or chrysanthemum.<sup>1</sup> Being the imperial badge, it has, of late especially, found its way into the decoration of almost every species of article. This, no doubt, has arisen from the Japanese dealer finding that the foreigner is easily gulled into accepting as a piece from a royal palace any ware that bears this badge. It figures on official uniforms in the same way as our crown does. The flower has long been a favourite; in the *Genji Monogatari* we read that "the chrysanthemums in the gardens were in full bloom, whose sweet perfume<sup>2</sup> soothed us with its gentle influence; around us the scarlet leaves of the maple were falling. It was altogether romantic." In addition to its being the imperial badge it, with fewer floret rays, is used by many lesser personages. The Japan Society of London has adopted it with twenty floret rays, *niju-yaye-giku*, but assumptions like this are not regarded with favour in certain quarters.

The peony (*botan*) probably comes next in the floral kingdom to the *Prunus* in the frequency of its delineation. The Japanese cultivate it until its flowers attain enormous sizes, and it is easy to understand its attraction to the artist by its gorgeous colour and massive structure, and its lending itself admirably to bold designs, whether flat or in relief. The double kind is that which is most frequently employed. It is a frequent motive for *mon*.

The iris is another popular favourite, and we find

<sup>1</sup> See p. 39 for an illustration of the conventionalised chrysanthemum and the other imperial badge, the *Paulownia imperialis*. This is the flower of a tree, and is similar to our purple foxglove in form, size, and colour: it has been introduced into England.

<sup>2</sup> Few Japanese flowers have any perfume, the jasmine being an exception.

its delicate-coloured flowers on stuffs, lacquer, inlaid ivories, and in mother-of-pearl (see *Tobakobon*, p. 129, and *Tébak*, p. 262). The metal-worker of old twisted



No. 110. — A Chrysanthemum Show.

its graceful leaves into delightful patterns for his pierced sword-guards. With its brother the lily, it is common throughout the country, growing almost without cultivation.

The tea-plant is one of the most ornamental of Japanese shrubs, as it is allowed to grow to a good size. It is a camellia, and has creamy white scented blossoms. The camellia itself is, curiously enough, not a favourite, because its flowers drop off whole, an unlucky reminder of "Heads off."

The lotus flower (*hachisubana*) is the Buddhist emblem of purity, for it issues unsullied out of mud. It forms the resting-place of Buddha, and upon it the fortunate entrant to Paradise is seated. Its leaves are usually gemmed with dewdrops, and this effect the artist seizes upon, for their insertion, or that of sparkling raindrops, will not only afford a clue to the state of the weather which it would represent, but its portrayal is a difficulty which he delights to overcome; this is especially so if he is a metal-worker, for he will then have, for every dewdrop he wishes to represent, to drive a tiny hole into his metal, make a minute silver globule, and fix it firmly therein:—

"Oh! Lotus-leaf, I dreamt that the whole earth  
Held nought more pure than thee,—held nought more true:  
Why, then, when on thee rolls a drop of dew  
Pretend that 'tis a gem of priceless worth?"

—*Henzen*, A.D. 835-856.

Pinks have long been favourites. Wild ones, noticeable for their beauty, grow profusely round Yokohama. A bouquet of the *Vadishiko*, or "little darling,"<sup>1</sup> is presented by the Genji prince to his lady-love, and in the poetical strain which it was the fashion then and for long after to adopt, he speaks of it by another name, *Tokonatsu*, or "everlasting summer":—

"When with composed gaze we view  
The mingled flowers in gay parterre,  
Amid the bloom of radiant hue,  
The Tokonatsu, my love, is there."

Another flower which attracted the Genji's admiration is the *Yugao* (or evening glory, whose "white blossoms

<sup>1</sup> In poetry it is often used to signify "baby."



one after another disclose their smiling lips in unconscious beauty." Of these his lady-love writes :—

" The crystal dew, at evening's hour,  
Sleeps on the Yugao's beauteous flower."

The *Asagao* (*Ipomea purpurea*), convolvulus or "morning glory," has now a great cult in Japan (see *Jap. Soc. Trans.*, v. 198). It too has for long been a theme for the poet :—

" The Asagao blooming in the country hedge,  
Finds none to greet it save the dawning day."

The lespedeza (*Hagi*) has attached to it several fables, chief amongst them being one in which it is represented as a maid beloved by a stag. Flowering grasses are much used in Art, amongst the most prominent being the *Susuki* (*Eularia japonica*).

The melon or gourd (*Hyotan*) is often seen, especially upon metal-work representations of houses, trailing over the sides and roof. It was the emblem of the great Taikosama, his first banner being a bundle of gourds. It grows to enormous size, such as 3½ feet long and 5 feet in circumference.

The festivals that occupy so large a portion of the Japanese's holidays are too intricate in their ceremonial to allow of extended notice here.<sup>1</sup> The New Year festivities alone would occupy a chapter, associated as they are with so many accessories which find a place in Art, *e.g.*, the red lacquer tray or "Elysian stand," *hōraidai* or the principal of three islands, with leaves of the evergreen *yuzuriha*, upon which are placed many objects having allegorical signification such as the *mochi*, the herring roe, dried sardines, lobster, persimmons, and chestnut kernels. Then there are the pine and bamboo saplings which border the doorway, typifying evergreen longevity, the rice straw rope (*shimenawa*) bringing the sweet breath of spring. Hung upon the rope are lobsters, fern fronds, and again

<sup>1</sup> For lengthier details see Brinkley's "Japan and China," vol. vi.

the *yuzuriha* leaves, the former "long life," the latter "evergreen freshness." These decorations are burnt on the 14th, and their place is taken by willow wands (*kezuri-hana*) fixed to the eaves. The formal presents of the New Year consist of the year jewel gift (*toshidama*) and things of little intrinsic value but of good omen—a fan, dried seaweed (*hoshinoti*), towel, parcel of paper, dried salmon, or sweetmeats—all wrapped up most carefully and tied



No. 111.—Lacquer Suzuribako. Autumn Flower and Grasses, and Full Moon.

with paper cords of good omened colours, red and white or red and gold, and the ends in a butterfly bow, under which is a bit of *haliotis* (*noshi*) or "stretched out," emblem of the strength and durability of affection, emerging from a quiver-shaped envelope.

Then every one buys toys, chief amongst which is the *takaramono* (see p. 64). All the youngsters are armed with gaily decorated battleboards (*hagoita*) with which they hit

the shuttlecock. These they love almost as much as their dolls, ornamented as they are with effigies of the great personages of Japanese history. Kite flying is much indulged in on this day, but even this pursuit, which is one for young and old, has its set times, as for instance at Nagasaki where on the 10th, 15th, and 20th of the third month (O. S.) all the world is engaged in the *shien-kai* (paper flying assembly). Kites run to a size according to the means of the flyer, some reaching 30 feet square with a tail 100 yards in length. Lastly there are the *manzai* dancers, one with a drum, the other with a fan, and the *torioi* or bird chasers, girls who in an enormous hat play on the *samisen* and drive away the birds of ill omen that haunt the precincts of houses on New Year's day.

The New Year festivals are non-religious, nor does that sentiment have any place until the 24th of the month, when the shrines of Emma Ō are visited, and little effigies of bullfinches obtained the previous year are exchanged for new ones—symbolic of expiation for sin. The bullfinch (*uso*) is kept in the sleeve, the word also meaning "falsehood," which is thus wiped out and a clean slate presented.

The festivals of the second month (akin to our March) include that of worshipping at the shrine of Inari, and trips to the plum forests.

The principal celebration of the third month is the *hina matsuri* or dolls' festival, on which much money and ingenuity is spent. In some instances from 500 to 1,000 articles of pigmy dress, furniture, etc., are got together round the dolls. Many of these are generations old. I had the pleasure of exhibiting before the Japan Society a collection of beautiful workmanship, and which formed a complete exhibition of household furniture (see p. 239). Peach viewing is prevalent in this month.

On the fourth day of the fourth month (May) the washing of Buddha (*kwanbutsu*) takes place. This is a temple rite, an image of the god being set up, on

which every worshipper pours water from a tiny ladle. On these occasions decorations of azalea *shikimi* and Deutzia blossoms are fixed at the gates of houses to avert evil. In this month the first of the flower festivals (*hanami*, "flower seeing") or cherry viewing takes place. All the roads are crowded with folk proceeding in their holiday attire to certain well-known spots, such as Uyeno, which are famous for their wealth of bloom. Every one is in high spirits, for the winter of discontent is over, and the cherry, the sign of spring and the pride of flowering trees, is arrayed in all its beauty. This festival lasts for weeks, and certain villages have the aspect of a fair, for the cherry viewing is an excuse for picnicking, at which it is the correct thing to indulge in cherry water. Already, however, modern progress is spoiling this. Special trains are run; and the *hanami* which used formerly to be indulged in at a trifling cost, now runs away with plenty of money. High prices are now asked for a good room through which the wind can blow the snowflakes of the cherry bloom. The "water windings" (*kyokusui*) used to be in vogue in this month, and pictures of it wherein a cup of wine is floated down a stream whilst verselets are composed before it reaches a certain point are often met with. Towards the end of May and the beginning of June gathering shells is a frequent excuse for picnics. This naturally does not admit of much dress display, but rather the reverse, except that coquetry calls for a show of colour in the *yumoji* or underskirt, and the *tenugui* or towel which forms a head covering.

On the fifth day of the fifth month is the boys' fête (*tango*) when every house that has witnessed the birth of a male child in the preceding year is decorated with a huge carp (p. 181).

The festivals of the sixth and seventh months are mainly religious, and according to Brinkley have lost much of their import. They include the *Tanabata*, in connection with which are the *tanzaku* or tablets of fine grained wood or bamboo, decorated in lacquer

and with tassels, and on which verselets are written. In August, the seventh month, five days are devoted to the *Bon* festival for the welcome and entertainment of the dead



No. 112.—Cherry Viewing (Hanami).<sup>1</sup> From the "*Toto Saijiki*."

who are then supposed to visit the earth. The elaborate

<sup>1</sup> The Japanese are especially fond of any flower which they have to look up to.

preparation of an altar and food are set out in Brinkley's "China and Japan," vol. vi. p. 74.

In the eighth month the moon is honoured, doubtless because the nights are delightfully fresh after the summer heat, and invite to riverside and water entertainments, but preferably because moonbeams are only perfect in that month. In spring they are interrupted by the blossom, in summer their reflection in the water surpasses the original, and in the winter they look desolate.

The autumn festivals end with the chrysanthemum shows, and the year with the *tsuina* the well-known and oft-depicted exorcising of the demons of pestilence and ill-luck, when parched beans are scattered about the house and the inmates repeat the words, *Oniwa soto fukuwa uchi*, "Depart demon, enter fortune." But the gayest festival is that of the street fairs at which the articles to be used in the New Year's festivities can be purchased.

Lastly, falling leaves and petals have always exercised a great fascination upon the poetical and artistic mind. We even read of the great war-god Hachiman reining in his charger to watch them. Poets have sung of falling petals for a thousand years.

"Too lightly woven must the garments be—  
Garments of mist—that clothe the coming spring :  
In bold disorder see them fluttering  
Soon as the zephyr breathes above the lea."

—*Yukihira*, A.D. 818-893.

The artist frequently utilises them to fill a vacant corner in his composition. No one who has not seen the country has any idea of the beauty of the showers of colours which a summer breeze carries over the face of a land so full of blossom as this. We have a poetical illustration of them in Hiroshige's print where the placid autumn moon is contrasted with the rushing of the waterfall and the fluttering of falling leaves. As the verse at the opening of this chapter shows, the autumn has always been a favoured time with the poets—it is the same with artists. For Japan is bounteously served with trees that put on

their most beautiful garments at that period, and many are the places in the length and breadth of the countryside



No. 113.—Full Autumn Moon over a Waterfall where Maples shed their Leaves. *Hiroshige*.

that are notable for their aspect at that time. Especially is this the case with the maples which one finds depicted in their bright scarlet and yellow garb in lacquer and metal-work. So, too, autumn flowers and grasses, usually wild ones, by the more graceful curves they assume than those at a sturdier time of year, are utilised in conjunction with the full moon, as on the cover of the beautiful *suzuribako* (No. 111). It is probable that the autumn full moon appears larger to the Japanese, as it does to us, than at other times. Certain it is that her artists fall into the same error as ours in making it larger than it really is.

There is a Goddess of flowers, by name Mokugé - hiyaku - yahimé - no - mikoto. She

holds in her right hand a mirror, and in her left a *tamagushi* (a branch of the *sakaki* tree with strips of paper attached to it), symbolic of the *magatama* or sacred jade ornaments, which in ancient times formed

part of the *tamagushi*. (See Dickins, "Fugaku Hiyaku Kei," p. 11.)



No. 114.—Bamboo and Sparrow.  
*By Fukei Kōtei* (see p. 211).



No. 115.—Salmon in the Rapids. *Kozuka by Riukasai Katsuyuki.*  
(*Author's Collection.*)

## CHAPTER X

### FAUNA

"To far Eastern faith all life is One ; and the forms that enclose it but temporary conditions."—*Lafcadio Hearn.*



No. 116.—Tanuki.  
*From a Netsuke.*

THE Japanese artist is certainly not so successful in limning the higher forms of animal life as he is those of the floral kingdom. For one thing, he is very often obliged to depict creatures that are not indigenous to the country, and which he has never seen in the flesh ; his Buddhist deities, for instance, owing to their Indian origin, have attached to them as attributes the elephant, lion, and tiger ; these he is called upon to introduce into pictures out of his imagination, or from a copy contorted by continuous repetition out of all resemblance. Moreover, as he is not proficient at drawing the face of his

deity in profile, he has often to foreshorten his attributes, and the mess in which he then finds himself is terrible ; his elephant appears to be modelled on the form of one of those blown-out balloons which come to this country from the East ; his tiger takes the similitude of a striped cat, whilst his lion is a puppy with hairy appendages placed just where fancy pleases. He is, however, more at home as he

descends the scale, and is hardly equalled in his portraiture of birds, fishes, and insects.

Japan is not bountifully supplied with beasts, either wild or tame. The wild are scarce, owing to the small quantity of uncultivated ground. The domestic are not plentiful, because the Buddhist doctrine of transmigration prohibits the eating of meat; so the ground is given up to vegetables rather than pasture. Carnivorous animals are confined to the bear, wolf, racoon, fox, marten, and badger.

It will be well to commence our notes upon animals by a mention of the twelve members of the Chinese duodenary cycle which have been adopted by the Japanese. The day in these countries was, until recently, divided into twelve horary periods of two hours, to each of which an animal appertains, but Japan has now adopted the European method of reckoning time except so far as assimilating the Christian era is concerned. They started from 11 P.M. in this order: rat, ox, tiger, hare, dragon, serpent, horse, goat, monkey, cock, dog, boar. Thus the delineation of one of these upon the reverse of a sword-guard should afford an indication as to the hour at which the event upon the front is taking place. The months are also known thus: *Mutsuki*, month of good intercourse; *Kisaragi*, month for doubling the clothes; *Yayoi*, the awaking of Nature; *Utsuki*, Hare month; *Satsuki*, Seed sowing month; *Minazuki*, month without rain; *Fumizuki*, Literary month; *Hasuki*, Falling Leaf month; *Kikusuki*, Chrysanthemum month; *Kaminazuki*, month without gods; *Shimofuritsuki*, White Frost month; and *Shiwazuki*, last month.

The years<sup>1</sup> are called by the names of the foregoing

<sup>1</sup> The years have certain cycles (*nengo*) which are known by names—the years' names for the last century, often required by collectors, are:—

Kyōwa - - - 1801-4	Manyen - - - 1860-61
Bunkwa - - - 1804-18	Bunkyū - - - 1861-64
Bunsei - - - 1818-30	Genji - - - 1864-65
Tempō - - - 1830-44	Keiō - - - 1865-68
Kōkwa - - - 1844-48	Méiji - - - 1868-1912
Kayei - - - 1848-54	Taisho (great
Ansei - - - 1854-60	righteousness) 1912

The intermediate years are counted thus: 1803, third year of Kyōwa.

animals, which consequently have been termed the signs of the Zodiac. Their origin has been traced to the Tartars, and it is singular that our ram, bull, scorpion, and lion have

an affinity to them. The *inrō* (No. 117) shows a portion of the signs, the rest being on the reverse.

Of the members of this cycle we have already noticed the tiger and dragon (pp. 75 and 73).

The ox (*ushi*) is, as we have seen, associated with Roshi (p. 79) and with the peach (p. 154). In a recumbent attitude it is also connected with the great minister Tenjin, as he used to ride it whilst in exile.

The rat (*nezumi*) is a prime favourite in Japan, in spite of its infesting

every house; it waits upon Daikoku, the god of wealth (p. 64); it is often depicted upon metal-work criticising a *kakémono*. Metal-workers are fond of making their rats piebald, probably for the reason that their so doing makes their task harder. Mice are few in comparison with rats.

The hare (*usagi*) figures frequently in Japanese Art, but it looks more like a rabbit than a hare. It was once a sacred animal, and worshipped as such. It lives a thousand years, and turns white when half that age, though it is not, curiously enough, emblematic of longevity. It has been associated with the full moon for ages past, partly from a supposed resemblance to an outline marked upon that satellite, and partly because of the unselfish hare of Indian legends which threw itself into the fire as food for Buddha



No. 117.—Inrō. Signs of the Zodiac.  
(Author's Collection.)

and was transferred to the moon.<sup>1</sup> The legend of the hare in the moon is known in every quarter of the world. When drawn in conjunction with the moon it is almost always seated and surrounded by the scouring rush. It is often to be seen pounding in a mortar the elixir of life; this has probably an Indian origin. The Chinese represent the moon by a *rabbit* pounding rice in a mortar. The Japanese by a *hare* who is pounding rice for a *mochi* or rice cake (the cake that is found in every room on New Year's day, and answers to our plum pudding)—the word *mochi* having also the meaning "full moon" (p. 133). The hare is drawn gambolling over the waves, whereby it is supposed to impregnate itself.

Although the horse (*uma*) is frequently rendered by the Japanese artist he is seldom, if ever, successful with it, as may be seen by Hokusai's portrayal of a rampant steed in the legend of the lady who showed her strength by holding it in with her foot (No. 119). This is the more remarkable, because many artists spend their whole life in painting nothing else, as pictures of horses form votive offerings at more than one celebrated resort for pilgrims. A frequent feat is to draw a horse in eight strokes, or to compress a scampering herd of a hundred within a very small compass. The horse, the symbol of manhood, is often associated with a flowering cherry; I have come across as many as three or four such in quite a small collection of sword-guards.

The goat (*hitsugi*), although one of the cycle, was until



No. 118.—Hare, Pounding  
Rice for a Mochi.

<sup>1</sup> See Harley's "Moon Lore," pp. 60-68.

recently unknown in Japan, which probably accounts for its being so seldom met with in Art; sheep are also rare,



No. 119.—Kugutsumé Kanéko, the Strong Woman of Kaizu in Omi. From Hokutai's "Manguva."

but deer are common, and are kept tame in many of the parks attached to the temples.

Dogs are usually round, fluffy, tailless creatures, and are the Chin or lap-dogs which were introduced from Macao in the seventeenth century by the Portuguese. A delightful group of playing puppies is depicted in No. 120. There are also pariah dogs, for whom perhaps the proverb was created: "If dogs go about they must expect the stick."

The boar (*inoshishū*) is a favourite with *netsuké* makers, who delight in the story of the artist Ōkio, who painted so realistically that a wild boar which he thought to be asleep when he drew it was declared by a critic to have been dead, which turned out to be the case. The artist Tamétaka was especially notable for his boar *netsuké*. There evidently is some reason for the frequent delineation of such an ugly creature upon delicate articles such as *inrō*.

In no particular does the Japanese betray the Chinese origin of his work more than in his draughtsmanship of monkeys (*saru*). He finds the long-armed breed so very attractive and useful, that he continually introduces it, although it is not indigenous to the country, where the only species is the red-faced ape (*Macacus speciosus*), whose tail is short, and fur fine and yellowish. The monkey is a great favourite with artists, and many, notably Sosen, have made the portrayal of its downy coat a speciality, in which they have never been surpassed (No. 130). Its playfulness and grotesqueness were sure to attract the sympathies of the humorous Japanese, who has even enlisted it into the service of the *Shintō* religion. Whilst statues are erected in its honour in that rôle, it does not escape the degradation of serving the wandering showman, as ivory carvings so often bear witness.

The three *saru* often found on metal-work are the trinity, composed of the blind, deaf, and dumb, who are worshipped because they will neither see, hear, nor speak any evil.

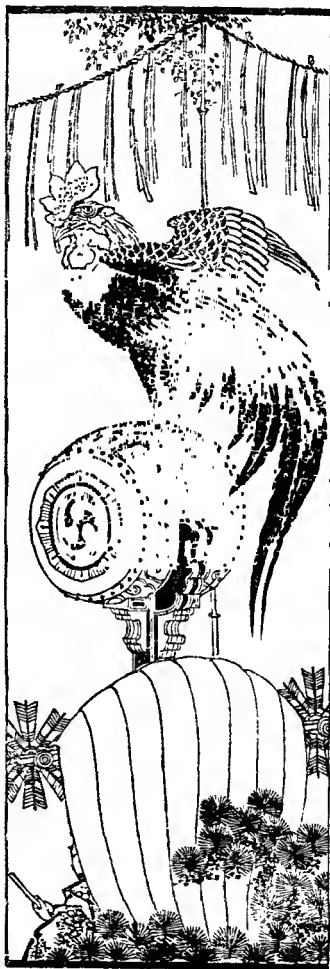
Amongst other mammals we must not overlook the bat (*komori*), of which there are ten varieties, and whose peculiarly formed wings are seized upon frequently and



No. 120.—Dogs. Portion of a Makimono. By *Nagasawa Rosetsu*, *cir.* 1790.

happily as a motive for ornamentation. The bat also often figures on Chinese porcelain, etc., but for another reason; its name *fu* has the same sound as *fu*, "happiness."

The cock (*oudori*) is especially attractive to the Japanese eye by reason of his plumage. His connection with the temple services has been already noted (p. 28). The ornament at the end of the drum, in Hokusai's illustration (No. 121), consisting of three commas (*tomoye*), which form a circle, after permeating Japan and being the commonest decoration in the empire, has come to be received even into English millinery, for the writer saw it at Ascot adorning a wonderful dress of white and gold. Called the *mitsudomoye*, it probably has a phallic origin, but in Buddhism it is held to be significant of the heaping up of myriads of good influences, good luck, long life, etc. It is the second badge of the once-powerful house of Arima, but, besides this, is found on roof-tiles, lanterns (at the *matsuri*, or religious illuminations), and on drums at the *Tanabata* festival. The writer in looking through a collection of lepidoptera saw one which may have possibly suggested the idea of the ornamentation. The butterfly is a common one



No. 121.—Cock on Drum. From Hokusai's "*Ehon Takiin Orai*."



in Japan, and bears upon its wing a marking which is exactly in the form of one of the three parts which is upon the *mitsudomoyé*. It is curious that this form is apparently seen by the Japanese in wave eddies. I have noted it as such on a seventeenth-century box-cover, by Kajikawa I. But the supposed derivations are almost endless; falling snow, waves dashing against a rock, a *tomo* or glove, and the crescent moon upon the sun, have all been suggested, the last named, as representing the male and female principles in nature.

Japan boasts the largest tree-snails (*clausilia*) in the world (and these find a place in Art) as well as the oldest of all living forms of this great group; so, too, it has the largest salamander and owl.

Fowls are common in Japan, and in drawings are usually accompanied by their chickens.

No one who has studied the Art of the country will be surprised to hear that the fox (*kitsuné*) and the badger, or racoon-faced dog (*tanuki*), are everywhere abundant. Each is credited with the power of assuming other forms; the *tanuki* is often drawn sitting on its haunches, drumming on its stomach apparently to the moon, but in reality in the hope of misleading travellers by this delicious sound; it also hides amongst lotuses with the same intent (No. 116), and acts in legend the part of pantaloon to the fox's harlequin. The badger resembles the American more than the European species: its face is doglike, its tail short and bushy, and it metamorphoses itself into inanimate objects, such as articles of furniture.

Not every fox has magic power, but when a century old it can take the form of a woman and possess human beings, and at a thousand it is admitted to heaven, becomes the celestial fox and has nine tails. It has the same character for thieving, mischievousness, and cunning as in western countries. It is honoured as the messenger of Inari-Sama, god of the harvest and especially of the rice-field, and from its presence in his temple has come to be regarded as the god himself. Little temples dedicated to

it are often to be seen on hillocks in the rice-fields, and figures of seated foxes in stone border the entrance to the pathway leading to them; upon the altars which are raised by the farmers offerings of rice are placed, and earth taken from their supposed burrows is treasured as a charm against sickness and disaster. It is worshipped even in

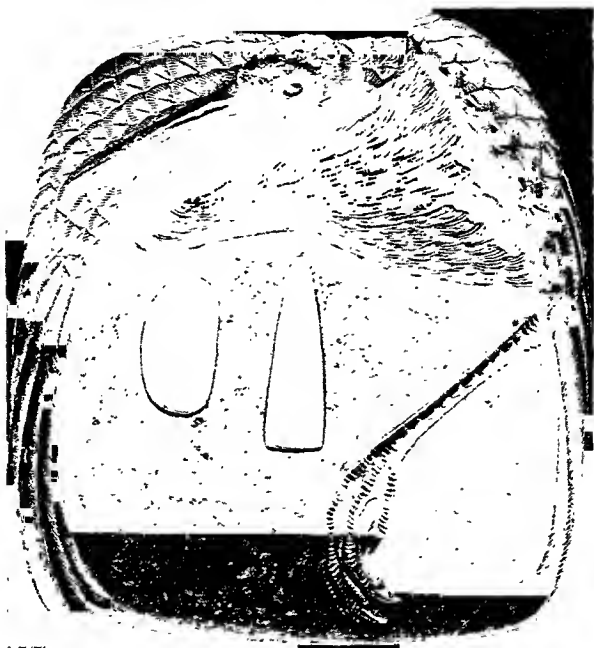


No. 122.—Foxes extinguishing Chochin (Lanterns).

large towns, and its little shrine, with bronze bells attached, may be seen in gardens. It is smaller than our fox and is found associated with the chrysanthemum, owing to a legend (Reed's "Japan," ii. p. 103), and perhaps also because it has a fondness for gardens, even those in large towns. In No. 122 it will be found putting out lanterns in

order to eat the candles. The inscription to this engraving states that there is an old legend that foxes used to practise this, and that it is still true. Folks who have been bewitched by foxes are still to be met with.

Many illustrations are of the game of *kitsuné ken* played with the hands, the positions of which represent a fox, man, and gun.



No. 123.—Cane. From a *Tsuba*.

Cats (*neko*—rat-killers), like their kinsfolk in Manxland, dispense with tails.

Squirrels are frequently drawn in conjunction with the vine, but they are not numerous in any part of the country.

Japan's king of birds is undoubtedly the crane (*tsuru*). It is termed by country folk "my great lord." As one of the representatives of longevity, it is held in much venera-

tion. "One crane's voice is better than the chirping of a thousand sparrows." The Japanese artist delights in the manner in which it lends itself to decoration, by the graceful lines of its body both when flying and at rest, and by its colours, and he drags it in on every possible occasion, although the bird is by no means common. The two kinds which are found are the white and the ashen coloured save for a red crown and black tail feathers and upper neck. The red-crowned or Manchurian crane (*Grus viridirostris*) has never been indigenous, and is rapidly dying out, although it alone is typical of longevity, but cranes of both sorts are becoming rare. The big bronze cranes which we see in curio shops have been used in gardens in Japan. *Fukusa* with the crane and pine embroidered on them are presented to new-born babes, and a clever adaptation of a crane is made in folded paper as a toy for children. The *tsuru* is the badge of several families of rank.

Silver herons or egrets (*sagi*) are more common, and are usually to be seen following the labourers amongst the rice, and share with cranes the common appellation by foreigners of "storks." White animals are sacred and are much esteemed. Hence the proverb, "To talk to the crows of the white heron."

The gorgeous plumage of the peacock (*kujaku*) naturally attracts artists. But as it is only three centuries since it was introduced into Japan, it is only found upon modern Art. It must not be confounded with the *Hō* (p 75).

The pheasant (*kiji*), on the other hand, originally came to us from China and Japan. The beautiful plumage, especially of the male bird, is taken advantage of wherever colour is required, notably in embroideries. It usually consorts with the cherry tree, both being so beautifully arrayed. So, too, the gay Mandarin duck, which, with its mate, is typical of conjugal felicity, is an oft-repeated subject.

Wild geese have apparently always been an attraction to the artist; their rapid motion and formal flight have

been most useful to him when he wished to import vigorous action into his work. Novelists and poets have been similarly affected, and many stories of the heroic days are connected with them, notably that of Kiyowara Takénori, who at the battle of Toriumi guessed the whereabouts of his enemy, Abe no Sadato, by the movements of the wild fowl. Geese are associated with rushes, it being believed that in making long flights they carry rushes in their beaks, which they drop on the waters to rest on. They are also associated with the moon, as a thousand-year-old poem tells: "The moon on an autumn night, making visible the very number of the wild geese flying past with wings intercrossed in the white clouds."

Falconry was a sport which was formerly enjoyed by the upper classes, and many pictures bear witness to this, as do embroideries, where the bird sits on a perch with a cord round its leg. Falcons or goshawks (*taka*) and eagles (*washi*) are to be found more frequently on old than new work, but they continue to be objects on which the metal-worker lavishes all his skill. The eagle attributed to Miochin at the Victoria and Albert Museum, for which £1,000 was paid, is an instance of this.

Another bird which is still employed in the service of man is the cormorant (No. 124), which may often be seen either perched on the bows of a boat, whilst the fisherman holds the torch which attracts the fish, or seated on a wooden dipper which he carries over his shoulder.

The soft grey plumage of the pigeon (*nobato*) and dove (*kaibato*) finds favour with the carvers in ivory and mother-of-pearl and cloissonists, and its representation in these materials leaves little to be desired. The dove is curiously enough sacred to Hachiman, and is the messenger of this god of war (see p. 32), and is found in the precincts of his temples. Its association may be due to the story of Yoritomo hiding in a tree from which two doves flew when the Taira approached, and so disarmed suspicion as to his being there.

The sparrow (*suzumé*) is as much at home in Japan

as in England, and is not, I believe, an importation, or voted a nuisance. The artist in metal-work delights in introducing its copper-coloured body, and the painter finds it a useful adjunct in imparting life and movement to his simple subject of waving grass or bamboo. We referred in our chapter on legends to the story of the tongue-cut sparrow (p. 92); it also figures in other stories.

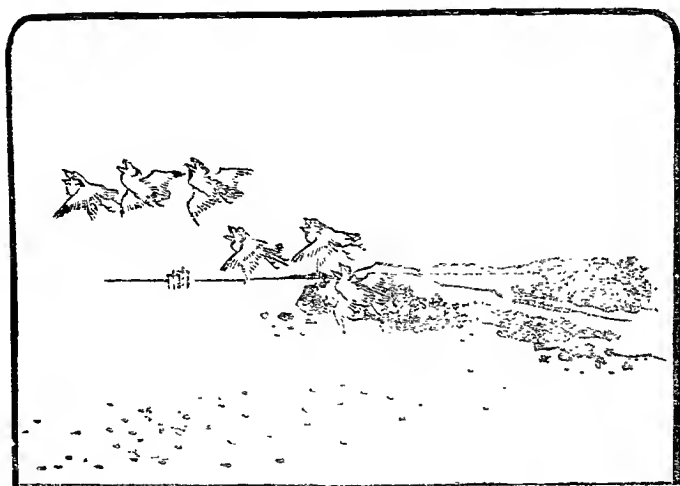
Flights of small birds will be frequently seen in sea-scapes scudding over the surf. These are *chidori*, which in an earlier edition I translated godwits. Ornithologists took exception to this, but have not supplied me with an alternative. *Chidori* fly in flocks, and are very numerous (No. 125). Korin had a special manner of drawing *chidori* on lacquer, which has been much copied by his imitators. They utter a plaintive cry, which has for long ages affected the poets with admiration.

According to Mr Dickins the most beautiful of all the birds is the *sankohō*, a fly-catcher, of bright cobalt blue and glaucous green colour and with two very long tail feathers, but I have never come across it on works of Art. The jay, with its bright plumage, and the woodpecker are used by lacquerists.



No. 124.—Cormorant Fishing.  
Hokusai's "*Ehon Teikin Orai*."

The thrush is common, and a bird frequently met with is the nightingale; its plumage is olive-green, mingled with grey, its breast being a greyish-white. The bird which is so often depicted flying across the moon is a small cuckoo of nocturnal habits, called *Hotōtō* from its note. For an old legend as to this, see Reed's "Japan," ii. 101. So a poet says: "When I gaze towards the place where a cuckoo has been singing—nought remains but the moon



No. 125.—Chidori. *From the "Yanagawa Gwajo."*

in the early spring." A kingfisher is beautifully portrayed upon a sword-guard in my collection.

Other European birds are the raven, house-swallow, redbreast, wren, tomtit, finch, snipe, and quail (very frequently met with and almost always associated with millet).

The finest work of the great metallists has been lavished upon imitations of lobster and cray-fish, facsimiled in every joint. Some are so flexible as to be quite uncanny when laid in the open hand. Crabs (*gani*) grow to enormous size, their claws being sometimes 4 feet long. They find

a place in every form of Art, the workman delighting in reproducing their articulations.<sup>1</sup>

An instrument of martial music was a spiral shell (*hora*) of large form, which, being bored at the point, was used as a trumpet. It is often seen in Art; there is a Japanese proverb à propos of bragging, "He blows the Triton's horn."

I have a sword-guard on which a Japanese gardener, in fun and in fear, is retreating from an ungainly animal, the giant salamander; it attains to a length of 5 feet.

Toads, which the artist is so fond of modelling, especially in bronze, and frogs, are common, and are the same species as ours, but the toad has a large head. The latter is often seen in company with an eccentric individual called Gama Sennin (p. 58). It is supposed to possess a spiritual essence and so to be able to escape from captivity.

Snakes are common, and attain a length of 5 feet; they are favourites with the artists in metal-work, who excel to a greater extent in portraying them than in anything else. Yasuchika's snakes on *tsuba* are celebrated.

Every Japanese is a fisherman. It is his favourite pursuit, and his patience is worthy of the most devoted disciple of the gentle craft. So far as regards the sea, he is amply rewarded, for it teems with varieties of the finny tribe; in fact, it is said to be more plenteously furnished than any other water on the face of the globe. The *tai*, or bream, is highly thought of: it is the one associated with Ebisu, the god of daily food (p. 63). There are also abundance of mackerel, plaice, flounders, herrings, tunny, and enormous bonitos; and in fresh water, salmon (*shaké* and *yamemé*), char, trout (*ayu*), carp (*koi*), and eels. A spouting whale is well depicted on a *saké* cup and *tsuba* in my collection.

A fish, usually a carp, leaping up a waterfall, is a common object in Japanese Art: it typifies ambition and perseverance, and is rewarded by transformation into a dragon (see No. 126). Fish, usually gold fish, kept in con-

<sup>1</sup> Some are supposed to be the ghosts of the drowned Taira warriors.





No. 126.—Carp ascending Waterfall. *Keisai Yeisen.*

finement are tamed to an extent that can hardly be credited.

A curious custom in Japan was to send a piece of dried cuttle-fish with a present. It is supposed to be a memento of the time when the nation were all fishermen, and such humble fare was the rule, and therefore is a suggestion of lowliness. A fish's dried head and shoulders is a common representation in Art of this custom.

No one acquainted with Japanese Art will be surprised to learn that vast quantities of insects (*mushi*) find a home in Japan, or that its inhabitants do not dislike them, but rather the contrary. The wealth of beetles and butterflies is enormous; and Rein states that more varieties can be found within a few miles of Tōkyō than in the whole of the British islands. In the autumn especially the air is alive with the chirping of the grasshoppers, etc., and songs a thousand years old testify to the pleasure which the inhabitants derive therefrom.

“Fain would one weep the whole night long  
As weeps the sudu-mushi's<sup>1</sup> song,  
Who chants her melancholy lay  
Till night and darkness pass away.”

From the *Genji Monogatari*, A.D. 990.

To Europeans the monotonous chanting of the insects becomes wearisome, but apparently the Japanese differ from us in some of their musical tastes, for they even admire the croaking of the frog.

Butterflies (*cho*) of rare species, as well as many known to us, abound. There are some 150 different species catalogued and 4,000 varieties of moths, more than double what we have in Great Britain. They are the symbol of womanhood, and ornaments in their similitude are worn in the hair in token thereof. They also come into the marriage ceremony (see p. 118) and are frequently adapted to *mon*.

<sup>1</sup> The *sudzu-mushi*, or bell-insect, is one of the most sweetly singing of the tribe; its song resembles a tinkling bell.

The quantity of stagnant water in rice-fields favours the propagation of dragon-flies (*akitsu*). They are always being met with in Art, and the empire is even named after them, from its resembling one in shape. For the many poems about dragon-flies see "A Japanese Miscellany," Lafcadio Hearn, p. 81.

The praying mantis and the grasshopper are great favourites with artists, the ugly form of the former being even perpetuated in silver models. Grasshoppers and other insects are kept as pets in those delicate little wicker cages which frequently come over to this country. The firefly (*hotaru*) inhabits every part of the country. Excursion trains are even run in the summer to places where it chiefly congregates, such as Uji in Yamashiro, and people spend the night in boats watching the Hotaru-Kassen or Firefly Battle over the river. The catching of fireflies is a considerable industry on Lake Omi, either for placing in cages or for displays at evening parties. When dead they are made into ointments and pills. One of the latter, *Kanshōgan*, or "Commander-in-Chief Pill," confers invulnerability (see "Kottō," by Lafcadio Hearn, p. 149). Fireflies are associated with the willow tree. Our delightful illustration by Harunobu (Plate I.) shows a boy and girl hunting them at night.

Many shells are used. The mother-of-pearl is principally obtained from the *Awabi*, a mollusc whose covering is called Venus's Earshell (*Haliotis gigantea*).



ACT III. — *By Kake Shunshu.*



## PART II.—THE ARTS OF JAPAN

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### INTRODUCTORY NOTE

HAVING presented as concisely as possible a survey of Japan, its History, Religions, Legends, Society, Flora and Fauna, as these are severally illustrated in its Art, I now propose, with equal brevity, to treat of the various phases of those Arts, “fine” and “industrial,” as they are termed, by which the country gained its reputation as one of the most cultivated nations of the world.

When this book was first written, and in fact until the end of the last century, there was assuredly no country that had been so indebted to its Art for the spread of knowledge concerning it. Whilst the features with which the first part of this volume is concerned were practically unknown to all save a few fortunate ones who had travelled thither, her Art of one kind or another had penetrated into the uttermost parts of the earth. But it was largely the Art of the past, for that of the Restoration era had been marking time if not retrograding owing to the new order of things occupying men’s minds too largely to admit of attention to Art. But, as we shall hope to show, this halting stage has been left behind, and in every Art and industry a crowd is pressing forward eager to increase the nation’s prestige. The results have been seen in the high position taken by Japan in the various world’s fairs that have since been held. For this reason in the chapters that follow I have felt bound to add the Art of the Méiji period to my survey of the Art of the past with which former editions alone concerned themselves.

## CHAPTER I

### THE SCHOOLS OF PAINTING

Shi wa yusei no Gwa ; Gwa wa musei no shi.

A poem is a picture with a voice ; a picture is a voiceless poem.

TO treat of the history of English painting in a single chapter would be about on a par with an attempt to put a quart of liquid into a pint measure. To do so of Japanese painting is a much more impossible feat, for whereas four centuries would practically cover its practice in this country, in Japan three times that number will not carry us outside the range of works of Art worthy of the name, or of records concerning them.

The *Nihongi*,<sup>1</sup> for instance, has references to painters in the seventh century : one such came with a face and body affected with a skin disease. The people disliking his spotted appearance wished to deport him, to which he replied, "If you dislike my skin you should not breed horses and kine which are spotted with white. Moreover I have a small talent. I can make the figures of hills and mountains." This so appealed to a nation of artists that they kept him, and he drew figures of Mount Sumi and of the Bridge of Wu. There are paintings still existent coeval with this spotted artist ; one such of no mean excellence is to be seen on the wall of the Kondō in the Hōriūji Temple at Nara.

In a country where fire is a constant destroyer of works of Art—even such as are as easily removable as *kakémono*, many works of this antiquity cannot have survived, but from the ninth century onwards, when Japan's greatest painter, Kanaoka, lived, records and specimens do exist in almost uninterrupted continuity, of which account must be taken in any well-ordered summary.

<sup>1</sup> Translation, Japan Society's Extra Publication.

At the outset difficulty besets the would-be student, for the divergence of opinion that exists not only as to the merits of Japanese artists and their schools, but as to the authenticity of their works, is ever to hand. Amongst western critics few have had such opportunities of study as Professors Anderson and Fenollosa, yet the last-named, besides holding up to ridicule the French savants, places the Japanese painters upon pinnacles, or degrades them



No. 127.—The Critics. *After Hokusai.*

to depths that few will be disposed to assign to them.<sup>1</sup> Kanaoka resembles Phidias, Nobuzane is divine, Tanéchisa is superb, and in colour resembles Titian, whilst as for poor Hokusai he is as a "barber" or a "bar tender" beside a god, a "saloon lounge" beside a gentleman.

The majority of foreign critics have until the recent

<sup>1</sup> Review of the chapter on Painting in Gonse's *L'Art Japonais* (Boston, Osgood & Co.).



display at the Japan-British Exhibition had but a tithe of the opportunities afforded to Messrs Fenollosa and Anderson of research on the spot, and therefore it is that one inclines to a blend of the impetuosity of the former with the calmer and more judicial spirit of the latter. But here again we are confronted with the fact that even during Professor Anderson's lifetime and especially since his death many of his attributions have been questioned. In this work, fortunately, it is not a question of a particular painting and how to recognise its authenticity, but of the Art of painting as a whole, and how it should be looked at by the foreigner.

Taking these in their reverse order there is little doubt as to the latter. If it is true as regards western Art it is especially so of oriental, that it must be approached in a spirit divested of all prejudices evolved by a knowledge of western styles, and with a sincere endeavour to regard it from the standpoint of the artist himself. What this is may be very succinctly put. The Japanese artist has always found himself much more hampered by limitations than his western brother—limitations imposed by tradition, by religion, and by material.

(*a*) *Tradition*.—Until recent times the whole of the Japanese canons were founded on those of China, and these in no wise fostered freedom of expression. Chinese painting is graphic and its painters were calligraphists first and above all else. Picturesqueness and an attempt to instil into the actual script what it verbally expressed was also implanted in painting. What this amounted to may be instanced by artists who have given their whole lives to idealising in monochrome the outlines of the bamboo, as it is considered to be one of the most graceful of all the members of the vegetable race. From the value thus given to line originated the maxim, "No line without a thought," and the corollary, "Not a line more than is actually necessary." This leads to a further canon which is particularly insisted upon by Professor Harada ("Japanese Art of To-Day," *Studio*, vol. 50, p. 99), namely, the present-

ment of the poetic aspect, the artist always endeavouring to portray the spirit of the object or scene that lies hidden below the surface, a secret of nature only discovered after close study of all its varying moods and aspects.

(b) *Religion*.—We have already (p. 50) dwelt upon this, and may therefore merely add that the profession of Art being until recent times almost entirely in the hands of those of the Buddhist faith it had to conform both in subject and teaching to its conventions.

(c) *Material*.—The world of Art has never been so prone as it is to-day to disregard the axiom that the manner of painting and the material of a picture must be kept in the background as much as possible. In our exhibitions we cannot get away from the smell of the paint and the texture of the canvas. To such an extent is this the case that it is no uncommon matter to find important alterations grinning from beneath a flimsy surface. With the Japanese artist this is impossible. He works on a surface of paper or silk with a brush full of colour which admits of neither timidity, slowness, nor error; he determines with set purpose to confine his effect in each picture to the narrowest limits (usually to a single expression) and to effect this with as little manual labour as possible, and life so passed "is an effort to produce abstract beauty under continuous restraint." This restraint is visible not only in an economy of lines but of the surface. Unlike western artists, unlike even the Chinese, the *horror vacui* has no terrors for him; on the contrary, and this is the greatest of the lessons that his Art conveys, he shows the value of blank spaces to the rest of his work.

The form of Japanese paintings fall under three heads:—

The *kakémono* or hanging picture, for display on the wall either by itself, or as one of a set which seldom extends beyond three. The painting is mounted on brocade or paper, to the lower end of which an ivory tipped stick is affixed round which it can be rolled. From the top depend two strips of silk (*futai*) said to have been added to prevent,

by their flapping in the wind, birds from perching and damaging the picture.

The *makimono* or roll, used for the portrayal of processions, combats, and any subject requiring lengthy treatment.

*Gaku*, framed, but not glazed, pictures.

The schools under one or other of which painting has been classified in Japan are :—

1. The *Chinese* and *Buddhist*, dating from the sixth century—the Chinese relying on feats of calligraphy in simple or quiet tones, suited to the educated classes—the Buddhist, gorgeous in gold, colour, and mounting, intended to attract the masses. Buddhist subjects were almost entirely religious, Chinese included history, legend, mythical zoology, landscapes, animals, birds and flowers, but all executed after Chinese models.

2. The *Yamato*, and *Tosa* (founders Kakuju and Mitsunaga), which arose in the eleventh century, distinguished by a Chinese basis with decorative colouring executed with a lighter touch than the Chinese School. The subjects, whilst not excluding those of the other schools, were more commonly connected with Japanese history and legends, and Court ceremonials.

3. The *Kanō*.—It is somewhat singular, but it may be taken as an aid to memory, that the development and perfection of painting in Japan came about in the century which was occupied by giants in the western world. Kanō Motonobu who originated the Kanō School, was born in 1476, Raphael in 1483. He lived, for a Japanese, a very long life, viz., until 1559, and was skilful in everything—figures, landscapes, birds, and flowers. He lived to see his grandson, Êitoku, commence a distinguished career with a style large in design and brilliant in colouring. Amongst his successors may be mentioned Tanyū (1602-1674) (No. 129), who struck out an original style, but who was followed by a number who suffered from the evils of heredity, affluence, and slavish adherence to tradition, the same being the case with the Tosa School.

4. The *Ukiyoyé School*.—It was not until the Genroku

period, round 1700, that the diffusion everywhere of culture and affluence caused a demand for Art, which brought fresh blood to its aid and palmy days for the artists. Amongst those who became celebrated must be named Iwasa Matabei (1577 - 1650), who founded the Ukiyoyé School, which, leaving subjects of mediæval aristocratic life, went to cotemporary scenes and figures, and produced not only genre pictures in this style but the now sought-after xylographs. He was followed by Moronobu (1630-1694), Chōshun, and Hishikawa Harunobu in the early, and Shunshō, Kiyonaga, Sukénobu, and Masanobu in the middle of the eighteenth century, with later on Eishi about 1780, Utamaro about 1790, and Toyokuni, 1800 (see *post*, p. 213).

5. The *Kōrin School*.—Cotemporaneously with the last-named school arose the *Kōrin School*, so named after the great artist of that name.



No. 128.—Chou Mao-Hsu admiring the Lotus Flowers. *Kano Masanobu* (1454-1550). (Owner, Count *Daté Munemoto*.)

His style, which had originated with Kōyetsu (1552-1637), aimed at an imaginative and hitherto unknown



No. 129.—Painting by Kano Tanyū.  
*From the Temple of Higdashi Hongwanji, Omi.*

treatment of nature, unfettered by the formalities and lifelessness of the Kanō School. His Art reflected the

wealth and extravagances of his age, but had great decorative power and beauty. It declined after his death, but revived again with Hōetsu (1757-1828).

6. The *Shijo*.—Naturalistic, dating from the middle of the eighteenth century, was named from the street where was the studio of Ōkyo (1733-1795), its founder; also called the Maruyama School. Ōkyo is said to have invented a new style, painting birds, flowers, grasses, quadrupeds, insects, and fishes from nature. His talents were also manifested in landscape and figure, and he was a colourist; people learned by his example, and he effected a revolution in the laws of painting in Kyōto. The story of the wild boar which he painted, imagining it to be asleep when it was dead, but so realistically that a critic, examining the picture, declared it must have been, which turned out to be the case, is well known. The idea has been illustrated over and over again in Art.

Washes and quiet tones and outlines are used by this school in preference to sharp edges and contrasts and strong body colours. Amongst its most noted masters were Goshun (1742-1811), also said to be its founder, Sosen of monkey fame (No. 130), Hōyen, Ganku, who formed



No. 130.—Monkeys. By *Mori Sosen* (1741-1811). (Owner, The Marquis *Dat* Munenobu.)

another school, Ippō, Gantai, Yusei, Yōsai, Kuburo, Zéshin.<sup>1</sup>

No. 120 is by Nagasawa Rosetsu, one of Ōkyo's pupils, who painted animals with an altogether western spirit, as is evident from this delightful portion of a *makimono* of dogs. He died in 1799, at the age of forty-five.

No. 131, by Tanī Buncho, a master of landscape in a style which united several. He became head of a school and painted to the Court. He was a prolific worker, and published many collections of views of celebrated mountains, etc. The *kakémono* illustrated is the left of a pair belonging to the Count Tokugawa Satotaku, and was exhibited in Paris in 1900. Buncho lived to the ripe age of seventy-eight, which carried him on to 1841.

Of Hokusai, we shall speak at length in the next chapter. The illustration we give here by him (No. 132) is one of a series of *kakémono* illustrating the six Tamagawa, or six rivers bearing that name in Japan, the word signifying river of crystal, and which by their beautiful surroundings were the theme of both poets and painters. The one illustrated represents a woodman captivated with the outlook.

Before proceeding to painting during the Méiji era it may not be out of place to give a description by Hashimoto Gahō, an official painter to the Court, of his reminiscences of student life some seventy years ago; showing as it does the conditions under which education was conducted and paintings were produced in the past.

The relation between the master and his pupils was that of a lord and his vassals. The students always addressed their master as *Tonosama* (my lord), and behaved towards him in all respects as feudal retainers to their chief. None of the merchant class was allowed to receive instruction, most students being sons of artists who had worked in the studio. When a stranger applied, an introduction from the chief of his clan was required. The age of students on admission averaged about fourteen. Every

<sup>1</sup> For an account of this school see "The Naturalistic Art of Japan," by W. Gowland, *Trans. Jap. Soc.*, i. 73.



No. 131.—Landscape by Buncho. *Count Tokugawa Satotaku.*



student, on admission, had to be received in ceremonial audience by "his lord," when it was necessary to present him with a case of five fans, and 100 *hiki* (about 80 *sen*) as a substitute for fish. Further presents had to be made



No. 132.—One of the Tama-gawa. By Hokusai.

to the master's son, to the lady of the house, and to the children. To his new comrades in the school he had to present about three gallons of *saké* and 300 *hiki* as a substitute for fish. In fact, there was not a single person in the household from the steward down to the meanest servant who did not receive presents. On the other hand, he was not required to pay anything subsequently in the way of fees, except a nominal sum for board.

The studio consisted of three rooms, one of which was occupied by the master, who seldom entered the other rooms where his students worked. The room next to the master's was occupied by students of medium grade, upon whom devolved the duty of attending to the master's wants. The last room, a large one, formed the principal atelier. Here the highest students occupied seats near the window, those newly admitted being

assigned the darkest part. Every student was allotted two mats, within which space (12 feet by 3) he had to place his desk and whatever else he needed for his work. At seven in the morning he was expected to be at his desk, and to remain at work till nearly ten in the evening,

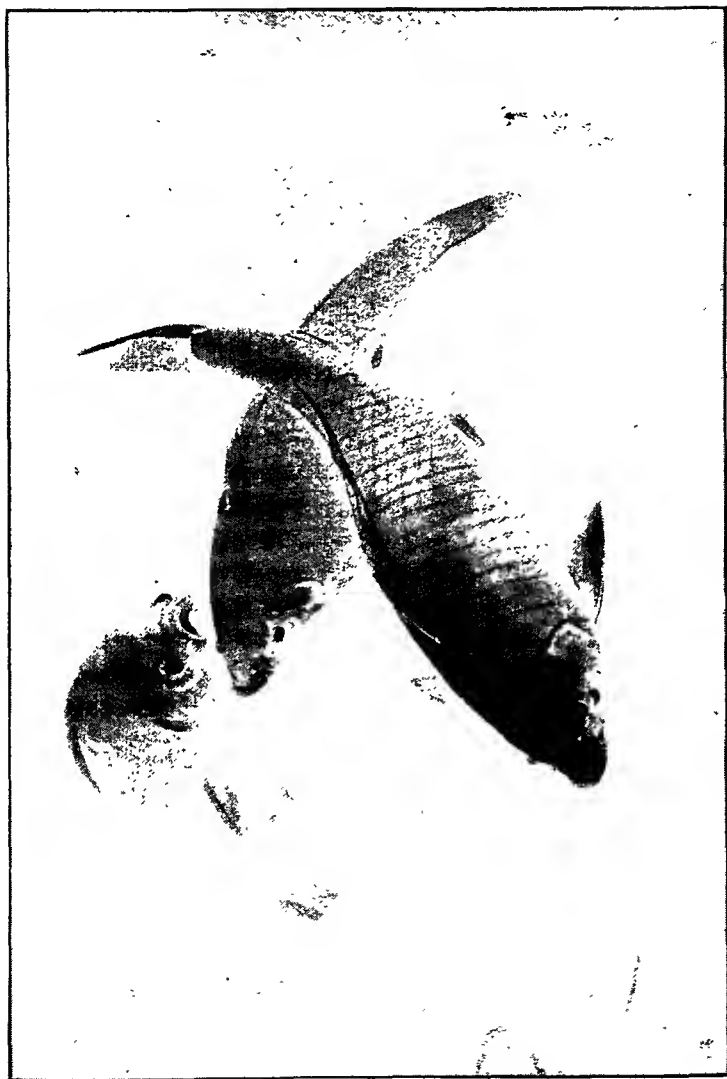


No. 133.—An Eagle. By Baren.

continued application which produced a malignant effect on bodily and mental health. No wonder that so few artists of originality were produced under such a system. When work was over, the student put everything on his desk and slept within his allotted space of mats.

The number varied, but generally amounted to sixty. There were *Deshigashira* (head students), who enjoyed the privilege of living outside the school and whose office was to maintain order and a strict watch over morals. Under the *Deshigashira* were *Ehonkata* (keepers of picture books), who had charge of the pictures in the stores used for study. The lowest officer was called *Enogukata* (keeper of colouring materials), whose duty it was to dust and clean the drawers in which the master's colours were kept. The regulations were mostly in the form of unwritten laws, orally transmitted from generation to generation. But certain written rules also existed, namely, that students should diligently apply themselves to study by day and night; that they should adopt the utmost precautions against fire; that, except on business for the master, they should not go out of the house without permission; that strict simplicity should be observed on all festive occasions; that students should neither feast nor quarrel among themselves; that they should be at their desk by 7 A.M. and not lie down before 10 P.M.; and that before retiring to rest each student should take his bowl in which the brush was washed to the "bamboo corridor" outside. Students were strictly forbidden to associate with artists of the *Bunjinga* (Chinese) School, nor were they allowed to study paintings of the *Ukiyoyé* style.

Instruction consisted exclusively in copying model pictures by artists of the Kanō School and occasionally of other schools. Students, it is true, sometimes had recourse to the study of life in nature, but this was entirely optional, and few displayed any inclination to avail themselves of the permission. The habit of copying from pictures of other artists seems to have often obliterated the instinct of originality. Thus it is related that certain



No. 134.—Carp. *By Shotei.*

graduates, having lost their model pictures in a conflagration, were obliged to abandon their profession and seek other means of livelihood.

Students, being mostly sons of artists, had already learned the rudiments of their art before entering the school. They were first put to copy from model pictures by the celebrated Tsunénobu. These, numbering sixty, were bound in five volumes, and copies of each volume were kept in the school for use by the students. The process of work was this: the student first made a careful copy of one of the pictures; then from his own copy he took several more copies, and at last, having made himself thoroughly acquainted with every detail and every stroke of the picture, he prepared a final copy, which he took to the master, who would pronounce judgment, pointing out merits and defects. Then the student proceeded to the next picture in the book and treated it similarly; until he had finished the whole five volumes. This task, carried on from sunrise to sunset, occupied about a year and a half, after which he passed to the "twelve pictures" of flowers and birds, also by Tsunénobu, the copying of which occupied about half a year. Then study became more promiscuous, copying pictures of Motonobu, Éitoku, Ryūmin, and other artists, both Japanese and Chinese, and practising the use of colours. In two or three years he would have progressed so far as to be able to assist the master, for it has always been the custom of the Japanese artist to have recourse to students for the comparatively mechanical parts, especially the colouring of drapery, armour, etc. In return for this the student was exempted from payment for board. About seven or eight years after this, he would receive permission to use for his signature one of the characters composing the name of his master. This was termed the "grant of one character." For example, the late Kanō Hogai, having studied under Masanobu, called himself Masamichi. The "grant of one character" signified that the student had graduated in the whole course of education provided at the school.

Ten years were usually required to reach this point, by which time the graduate was about thirty.

A student, sufficiently fortunate to obtain the "grant of one character," went home and opened a studio of his own, for he was then qualified to set up as an artist of the Kanō School. He would teach his pupils by means of the copies which he had made while at his master's school. One can easily understand with what a multitude of copies the country must have been flooded by this system. Many a collector is utterly perplexed to conceive how any artist, however indefatigable and facile, could have painted the thousands upon thousands of pictures confidently ascribed to such renowned masters as Tsunénobu, Tanyū, and so forth; pictures which, though their merits are not sufficient, perhaps, to dispel all doubt of their genuineness, have still so much to recommend them that even the expert is misled. How many of them are nothing more than those "final copies" which the student—his faculty of imitation stimulated to the highest degree of exercise not only by perpetual practice but also by the consciousness that his career depended on the fidelity of his reproductions—made after repeated efforts and patient poring over a model in the "Five Books"?

The hereditary pension of the Kanō master, under whom Gahō studied, was 200 *koku* of rice, but he spent all his income on his school. He waited on the Shōgun on all days having 2, 7, 3, or 8 in their numerals. On days having 2 or 7 in their numerals, his business was to give the finishing touches to illustrations of the *Sanden Shi* (a Chinese history). On days having 3 or 8 in their numerals, he received orders from the Shōgun for pictures to be given as presents to *Daimyō*. These pictures were executed in his studio by disciples. He also received orders from many *Daimyō*, and his apartment was always full of silk sent by the latter to serve as canvas. He does not seem to have been very punctual in the execution of these orders, for it is stated by Gahō that a quantity of the silk sent by them was left to be eaten by moths.

When this work was first issued in the eighties of the last century, the *Méiji* cycle, the era that commenced with the accession of the late Emperor, had run but half of the forty-six years to which it extended, and for the greater part of that time the nation had been too much occupied with rearranging its business affairs to attend very seriously to Art. It had, moreover, in no wise recovered from the inertia that accompanied the dying rule of the Tokugawa, or the potent changes made in the status and fortunes of those who had hitherto been the patrons of Art. Art was affected by the downfall of the Shōgunate more than any other profession. Official painters lost their posts, the nobility their revenues, and the *Samurai* their livelihood, whilst even the merchant class could not foretell what their future financial position would be. In addition to this the works of the great masters flooded the market, being offered by their late owners for what they would fetch.

Under such conditions it is not surprising to find that even hereditary artists were reduced to desperate straits. No one thought of Art as a profession, and every artist in being either changed it or barely lived on some vulgar handicraft. The Kanō family was broken up, as their traditional Art ceased to appeal to any one, whilst the Tosa artists were unemployed by the new Government. A few, however, did their utmost to keep the light burning and artistic traditions from perishing: amongst these were Yōsai, Gyōsai, and Zéshin.<sup>1</sup>

Yōsai professed the Yūsho Kugwa style which had arisen in the preceding period out of the study of the national classics, and having a thorough knowledge of costume and skill in depicting realism he improved historical painting. His skill in portraiture also reached a standard hitherto unattained. He was appointed "Painter Chronicler of Japan" to the Emperor. His pupil, Yoshi-

<sup>1</sup> Many of the materials for this survey have been gathered from "Fifty Years of New Japan," vol. ii. chap. xviii., "The Fine Arts," by N. Masaki, Director of the Government School of Art.

toshi Tsukioka, it was who in the illustrated newspapers and *nishikiyō* established a new style of *ukiyōyō*, marred only by its lack of simplicity of line.

Gyōsai and Zēshin each formulated his own style of Kanō and Shijō respectively. Both, especially the former, excelled in humorous caricature.

The Maruyama School, founded by the last named, still exists, and numbers amongst its artists of distinction Kwansai, Bairi, Hyakunén Gyokushō, and Kéinén. It is at present the most flourishing school of any for the reason that it is best adapted for assimilation with western tenets, the work of Ōkyo still being a power in the Art world.

The Kanō School, from being the monopoliser of State patronage, has practically died out, the master, Shōsen, and his pupils Hōgai and Gahō being the only names of note, and the two last named are no longer orthodox in their work. So, too, the Tosa School has entirely gone out of fashion, the only name to be mentioned being Kwangyo Morizumi.

Buddhist painting is also practically non-existent in any original form, any pictures and statuary required being provided for by ordinary craftsmen copying old masters.

The artists of the *Ukiyōyō* School are many, but they are for the most part merged in one or other of those already named.

The term *Bijutsu* (beautiful or Fine Art) has of late been used to distinguish painting and sculpture from what we term the minor Arts, but which were not originally classified as such in Japan. Intercourse with the outside world brought about their recognition. It was at first mainly due to Commissions being sent to represent Japan at foreign exhibitions, the first being that of Vienna in 1873, Japan being more completely and successfully represented at each successive display. Then it came to her turn to organise exhibitions, and National Art Exhibitions were held at Tōkyō in 1882 and 1884, and in 1887 a Fine Art Society was formed that has held annual displays ever since. Art schools were about this time opened throughout



the country, and in 1890 the office of Court Artist was resuscitated, and the value of the country's Art treasures was recognised, and a bureau appointed to catalogue them.

Japanese painting on western lines, with which we have little here to do, has undoubtedly and naturally made progress. It was first taught in Japan by an Englishman, Wirgman, and of his pupils, Yuichi, Hōryū Gosēda, and Hosui Yamamoto have made names for themselves, but Fontanesi, an Italian, having been appointed in 1876 Instructor of Painting in the Art Department of the newly founded Imperial Engineering College, had with his successors, also Italians, most to do with its progress. Amongst their pupils, Koyama, Matsuoka, Asai, and Kawamura, the most notable, formed the Měiji Fine Art Association, now the *Taiheyō Gwakai* (Pacific Painting Association). The aims of the French Impressionist School, furthered by Kiyotēru Kuroda and Keiichirō Kumé who had studied in Paris, infused life into a movement that was showing signs of becoming moribund, and established a new Art Association termed *Hakubakai*. Under these two painting is developing on western lines. This is inevitable, however much it may be lamented by those who would fain see the national styles perpetuated.

The Restoration had been effected by men trained in Chinese ethical ideas and well versed in the Chinese classics. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that for some considerable period subsequent to that event the study of Chinese formed the basis of culture and its popularity extended, or that the *Nangwa* School of painting, which had started with the revival of Chinese study, should be the most popular of any. Every member of the school, therefore, set himself to work to attempt landscape, flowers, and plants in the manner, covering reams with sketches in monochrome, in which crudeness and coarseness were mistaken for elegance and grandeur, and every one who took brush in hand imagined himself a master. Degeneration, therefore, permeated the whole body with fatal rapidity. Amongst the crowd, however, there naturally

were exceptions such as the landscape painter Sōun, and the flower and bird painters Yūkoku and Kwatei. The school still exists with many professors, some of whom produce work on a level with any that Japanese artists are still putting forth. This in part is due to the recent spell of prosperity, and in part to the variety of the methods employed, the most popular being perhaps *bokkotsu* which combines the painting of light and shade by a single stroke of the brush, a device brought to perfection by Ōkyo.

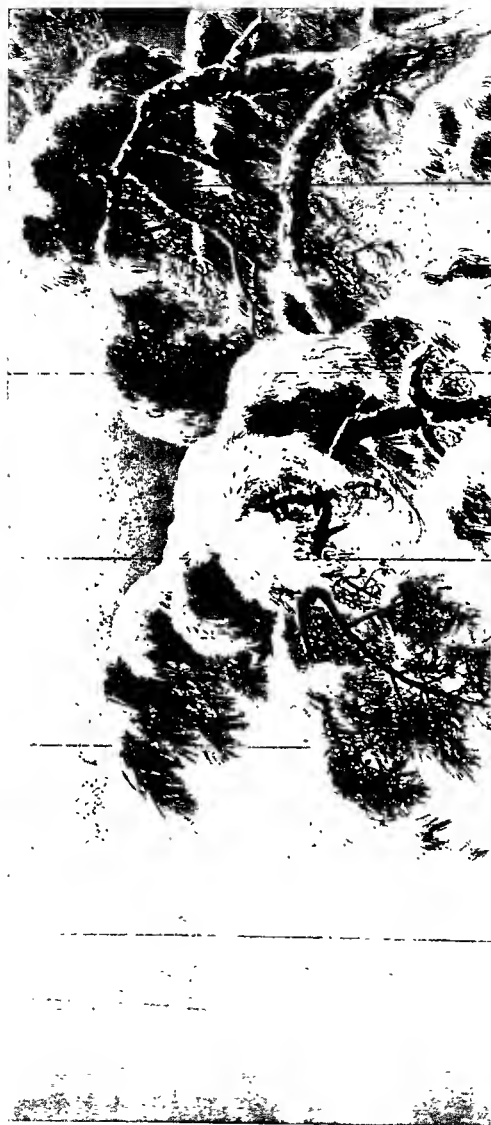
Recent imperial patronage either by the family or for the household has materially assisted the present boom, for it is held in far greater esteem than in western countries. Hitherto it has been confined to sculpture, metal, and lacquer work, and to Japanese paintings, but oil pictures have lately been included, which it is feared may not be a healthy form of assistance.

The collection of Japanese and Chinese paintings at the British Museum, added to as it has been of late years as regards the representation of the latter, afford ample ground for the study of the Art of these two countries.

A still greater opportunity was afforded by the collection sent over to the Japan-British Exhibition of 1910, a display so large that a portion only could be shown on the walls at one time. Every facility was afforded by the Japanese Commission to those desirous of seeing it, and one is afraid that that body must have been disappointed at the few who availed themselves of the unrivalled opportunity which the bounty of the Japanese Government and private owners permitted, one which may never be repeated, certainly not for many years.

The illustrations for a chapter such as this are necessarily restricted and altogether out of proportion to the subject, but they have almost all been derived from pictures shown at that exhibition, and therefore may be taken as masterpieces by the painters selected.

No. 135, Pine Tree in Snow, a screen by Yamamoto Shunkyō, is an example of the Kyōto School which depends largely on completeness of execution.



No. 135.—Pine Tree in Snow. Screen by Yamamoto Shunkyō.



No. 136.—A Screen. By *Tiravaki Kōgyō*.

No. 136, a screen by Terasaki Kogyo of Tōkyō, is by an artist so versatile that he paints pictures that are unrecognisable even by the critics. He was a pupil of Gahō (see p. 194) and of the school of Buncho.

No. 137 is by a native of neither of the great cities, but of Okazaki. Ohashi Suiseki is considered the best of contemporary animal painters, and his picture of "Tigers in Snow" was perhaps the most popular of any at the Japan-British Exhibition.



No. 137.—Tigers in Snow. *By Ohashi Suiseki.*

No. 138, *The Breeze*, by Nada Sanzo, is the only example we give of a picture founded entirely on European lines. We do not know whether the artist has ever seen any of Frank Brangwyn's work, but it resembles that master in subject, colour, and manner of painting.

No. 139, *Autumn Flowers*, is by Hoguchi Shohin, a lady artist, ranking as the foremost one in Japan: she holds the appointment of Court Artist and this drawing was bought

by the Department of the Imperial Household when exhibited in 1910 in Tōkyō.

The following names are given by Professor Harada as those of the foremost artists of to-day.

*Tōkyō*.—Kotei, Gyokudo, Gyokushō (Court artist),<sup>1</sup> Kampo (Court artist), Kogyo, Kwanzan, Gyokudo, Kwason,



No. 138.—The Breeze. *By Nada Sanzo.*

Seitei, Taikan, Naohiko, Bunkyo, Fuko, Jippo, Beikwa, Gekko, Koko, Tamon, Hokkai Koko.

*Kyōto*.—Shunkyō, Kahō, Seiho, Kéinén, Shonen, Gyokusen (Mochizuki), Zaisen (Court artist), Hobun, Kokyo, Bairen, Kokoku, Baiyu, Okaku.

<sup>1</sup> Longevity appears to attach itself to painting in Japan as in the western countries. Gyokushō is seventy, Kampo is over eighty, Naohiko over ninety.



No. 139.—Autumn Flowers. *By Hoguchi Shohin.*

*Osaka*.—Kokoku Kinseki, Chokujo.

*Okazaki*.—Suiseki.

*Women*.—Shohin (Court artist), Sakakibara and Uye-mura Shoen.

The rapidity and ease with which a Japanese artist works is a factor that cannot be omitted from notice. An extraordinary and almost unbelievable instance of it is recorded in the case of Fukui Kotei, an artist who was selected to exhibit his prowess in this respect before Prince Arthur of Connaught, when in Japan on the Garter Mission. In one summer day, working from sunrise to sunset, he painted a picture for each of 1,224 guests whom he was to entertain that evening, every one of them of *Kake'mono* size—The "Bamboo and Sparrow," reproduced in No. 114, being one of them! It is needless to say he worked with two brushes.

Books of reference on Japanese Painting are :—

Alfred Morrison, "The Painters of Japan"; L. Binyon, "Chinese and Japanese Art"; J. H. Dixon, "Japanese Artists of To-day," *Jap. Soc. Trans.*, vi. 152.



## CHAPTER II

### COLOUR PRINTS

“The eastern city I leave,  
And—without a brush  
To paint new pictures,  
I take the long road  
That leads to the distant view.”

—*Hiroshige's Last Poem.*

IT is remarkable, but none the less true, as regards most of the branches of Art that come under notice in this handbook, that the last quarter of a century has brought but little increased knowledge or a higher class of specimens from which to gain it. But in that with which we deal in this chapter the case is different, especially in so far as England is concerned, for exhibitions, acquisitions by our museums, and the trouble bestowed upon the subject by English authors have advanced very considerably not only knowledge but appreciation. The additions to the collections at the British and Victoria and Albert Museums of late years now render it comparatively easy, for Londoners at least, to see the best examples of the Art, whilst in the writings of Mr Arthur Morrison and Mr E. F. Strange<sup>1</sup> a fund of information may be gathered. No subject is now so thoroughly exploited.

Printing and illustration by means of block printing were practised by the Chinese centuries before either was known in the western world. When the Japanese adopted

<sup>1</sup> The handbook on Colour Prints by Mr Strange, obtainable at the Victoria and Albert Museum, and containing 169 pp. and 84 full-page illustrations, could only be produced for 1s. by a Government department.

them is not certain, but engravings are extant that date from the thirteenth century. As none of my readers are likely to become the fortunate owners of such early examples, I pass on to a period more likely to be of interest to them.

The colour prints, examples of which are now the cherished possessions of collectors all the world over, were originally designed by artists of one school only, out of the many into which Japanese artists ranged themselves. It was amongst the latest foundations, and originated, as before noted (p. 191), with Iwasa Matabei (1577-1650), a man of noble birth. He had studied both the two great styles of painting, the Kanō and Tosa, and from them he evolved a style of his own. It was named *ukiyo-yé* after the subject that it principally affected, namely, the ordinary life of the country, in opposition to those of warfare, history, and the life of the Court, *ukiyo-yé* meaning "passing world pictures," which Mr Morrison would translate into *genre*. Neither Matabei nor his immediate followers designed prints, and it was not until the middle of the next century that Hishigawa Moronobu initiated the multiplication of pictures by means of wood blocks that came into such vogue in the centuries that followed.

It may be well here to give a description of the process by which these so-called "prints" were produced, for they are not prints as we understand the word, no printing press being used.

The technique is thus described by Anderson:—

"The picture, drawn for the engraver upon thin translucent paper, is pasted face downwards upon a block of wood, usually cherry—sawn in the direction of the grain, instead of across it, as in Europe—and the superfluous thickness of paper is removed by a process of scraping until the design is clearly visible; the borders of the outline are then incised with a knife, the interspaces between the lines of the drawing being excavated by means of tools of various shapes. The ink is applied with a brush, and the printing effected by hand pressure (assisted by a kind of pad), to which procedure may be attributed much

of the beauty of the result. Gradations of tone and polychromatic effects may be produced from a single block by suitable application of ink or colour upon the wood ; and a great deal of artistic feeling is exercised in the printing of the picture after the designer and engraver have finished their portion of the work. Uninked blocks for the purpose of embossing portions of the design, as an aid to the effects of colour printing, were used about 1730, and perhaps earlier.

"The effect of printing from two or more blocks was in some cases obtained by preparing a single block with ink of different colours, or with different shades of the same colour. This appeared as early as 1740 in landscapes in the *Gwako Senran*, where the distance is represented by pale ink, against which the dark foreground stands out in bold relief, and in the *Sōshiseki Gwafu* (1769-1770) chromatic effects are produced by the same means. Sky and water tones are in like manner graduated, the superfluity of colour where the lighter shade is required being removed by wiping the inked block with a cloth.

"In ordinary colour prints effects are obtained by the use of a number of additional blocks engraved in series from copies of the outline impression taken from the first or outline block. The correctness of register is secured by preserving two angles of the original block level with the surface of the lines of the engraving, and marking each of these with incisions in a certain direction. The angles are printed off upon the sheet bearing the first outline, and are repeated in facsimile in the cutting of all the subsequent blocks, the corner marks left upon the paper after contact with block No. 1 thus being made to serve as an exact guide for the accurate apposition of the sheet upon each successive block. The printings are all effected by hand pressure."

The employment of block printing was at first mainly in the service of religion for the reproduction of pictures of deities, afterwards for the illustration of romances and novels, in which the cuts were on a par with those to which

we are accustomed in the chapbooks that preceded the days of Bewick.

Then came single-sheet prints (*ichimaiyé*), and the large class of productions that emanated from the theatre as advertisements and portraits of favourite actors, scenes, and plays. These were followed by pictures of every-day life.

It must be understood that productions such as these were considered as of little value, and only circulated amongst the lower classes, and hardly came within the category of Art as understood by the Japanese. And this estimation of them continued until recent times, the Japanese viewing with unconcealed contempt the appreciation of such productions by foreigners. It is only very recently that this appreciation has drawn the attention of Japanese Art connoisseurs to them. Much of their rarity is due to their non-preservation owing to the little heed paid to them. Nor was their value as historical records adequately recognised. Without the products of this school the nation would have been almost destitute of data concerning the life of the masses as well as the classes during one of the most picturesque epochs of its history.

Their greatest value, however, is to the designer, the book illustrator, and the poster maker, for they contain, as Mr Strange says, an inexhaustible fertility of invention in arrangement, in colour scheme, in details of pattern, in the proper use of line in conjunction with masses of flat colour, in the effective placing of figures on a panel and disposition of the lettering, signatures, and seals. Among the thousands of prints that he has been so fortunate as to induce the Education Department to acquire for the Library at South Kensington, he asserts that he has very few that possess any close resemblance to each other.

The tale of Japanese colour prints is naturally one of evolution. First came the *Sumiyé*, or those printed only in black, to be followed by the *Tanyé* in which a red lead pigment predominated. To these succeeded *Kurenaiyé* which had a larger range of tones, and derived their name from a red, *Kurenai*. Lacquer was also enlisted into

service, and prints in which it appeared were styled *urushiyé*, "lacquer pictures." *Béniyé* was at first the name for those on which a soft vegetable pink was used, usually in conjunction with green, but was subsequently used to designate pictures with more than these two primitive hues. When colour printing attained to its highest pitch of perfection the term *nishikiyé*, "brocade picture," was used.

Chromo-xylographs after a time extended to any number of varieties of shapes and forms—those that served to decorate the pillars of a house, being tall and narrow, were termed *hashirakaké*; *Kakemonoyé* were tall but wider, resembling the paintings of that name; whilst *surimono*, although meaning "a printed thing," was applied to private prints or commemorative or New Year's cards. A picture also if of large size was made up of more than one sheet, sometimes of as many as twelve.

A list of the principal exponents of the Art is somewhat difficult to frame. In Mr Strange's handbook there will be found not only the names but the signatures of 195 artists, and as this is of easy reference I only here set out the foremost engravers.

Hishigawa Moronobu (1638-1714?). Founder and initiator of all styles. Prints either plain black or brightly coloured by hand. Both illustrator and fabric designer. Thirty prints, dated 1659-1695, sold in Hayashi sale, 1902.

Kiyonobu (Torii Chobei) (1663-1729). Founder of the Torii family that first used chromo-xylography, and introduced theatrical posters and sheets.

Kiyomasu (Torii II.) (1679-1763).

Our illustrations of Kiyomasu's work are: No. 44 from a large upright *sumiyé*, showing the Gods of Good Fortune parodying a well-known story, that of the feast of Wada Yoshimori, and No. 140, a girl in a *kimono* inscribed with poems.

Masanobu (Okumura) (1685-1764). Prints coloured with lacquer, perhaps the first to use *beniyé*.

Two examples of Masanobu's work will be found here: No. 81, a girl walking, distinguished by its dignity in bearing and line. It is a *Tanyé*, being in red and black only.



No. 140.— Girl. *By Torii Kiyomasu.*



No. 141.—Pleasure Boat and Fishermen. *Kitagawa Uamaro.*

The second, Plate III., a *Beniyé*, having the soft pink (*beni*) and green which by superposing as in the boy's belt gives a third and darker tint. The subject is of two girls walking, one reading a playbill, attended by a boy who carries a dress box.

Kiyomitsu (Torii III.) (1735-1785).

Kiyonaga (Torii IV.) (1742-1815). The greatest of the Torii with widest range and fullest palette.

See Plate II. A girl, maid and youth; the second, girls walking, followed by two children and a maid.

Kiyominé (Torii V.) (1786-1868). Work rare.

Kiyofusa (Torii VI.) (1832-1892). Otherwise Kiyomitsu III.

Harunobu (Suzuki) (1718?-1770?). Improved process of *nishikiyé*. Ranks amongst the highest for graceful and simple pictures of women and *hashirakaké*.

Our frontispiece, Plate I., is an example of this artist's work—a youthful couple hunting singing insects by the light of a hand lamp, night being represented by a solid black background.

Koriusai. Principal member of school founded by Harunobu, whose work he imitated. Noteworthy for power of composition. Splendid bird painter.

Harushigé. Pupil of Harunobu.

Shigemasa (Kitao).

Masanobu (Kitao) (1761-1816). Book illustrator of great merit.

Masayoshi (Keisai Kitao) (1761-1824). Book illustrator of great originality.

Shunman (1757-1810). Book and flower illustrator.

In the rare three-sheet colour print, Plate IV., by Shunman, conventionality is carried to an artistic extreme, the effect of night being obtained by lanterns relieving the monotone of the picture by giving colour wherever the light falls, and the interior of a guest chamber being also in colour, and therefore supposed to be illuminated.

Toyonobu (Ishigawa).

Shunshō (Katsugawa) (1726-1792). Master of Shunrō (Hokusai), Shunyei, Shunchō, and other talented pupils.

Bunchō (Ippitsusai). (See No. 84.)

Utamaro (Kitagawa) (1754-1806).





No. 142.—The Hot Bath. By Utagawa Toyokuni.

Utamaro's work is so popular that I make no excuse for giving two popular specimens of it, especially as they illustrate other subjects besides chromo-xylography. In the three-sheet print No. 141 the artist has very ingeniously veiled a portion with the meshes of the net that the fisherman has hauled up to the delectation of a party who have pulled up to watch the catch. Life is further evidenced in No. 11, the summer storm, where a picnic party are taking refuge under a tree towards which others run. Thunderstorms affright even the Japanese as is evident by the girl who stops her ears, and the child who cries to be taken up by its mother.

Toyoharu (Utagawa).

Toyokuni I. (Utagawa) (1769-1825).

No. 142, an example of Toyokuni's work, is interesting for other reasons than the subject. One such is the cast shadows on the wall of the clothing which hangs from the bamboo racks. It is with one exception the first example of the introduction of shadows, the earliest being in a landscape by Shunsho.

Toyohiro (Utagawa) (1773-1828).

Yeishi (Chobunsai). Founder of Hosoda School.

The delicate print, No. 7, is a fine example of this most attractive master.

Toyonobu (Utagawa).

This artist of much promise died young. The subject of No. 75 is interesting on this account.

Yeizan (Kikugawa).

Kunisada I. (Toyokuni II.). Pupil of Toyokuni I. (1785-1864).

Kunisada II. (Baichoro) (1822-1880).

Kuniyoshi (Utagawa) (*d.* 1861). Celebrated for battlepieces.

Kunimasa (Utagawa) (1772-1810). Actors' portraits.

Kuninaga (Utagawa). Designer of lanterns.

Sharaku (Saito Jurobei). Actors' portraits.

As will be seen by Plate V., the work of this artist claims distinction by quite other means than that of the majority of his contemporaries. Simpering beauty has no place in his category, his prints being the most powerful and realistic that have issued from the Japanese press. The illustration in colour is from a very rare set of portraits of actors in character, twenty of which in a recent exhibition at The Fine Art Society were priced at £1,000. The background is oxidised silver. No. 85 is a three-sheet print of three actors. Sharaku are much sought after in Paris. He worked for two or three years only.

Shunrō (Katsugawa, *i.e.*, Hokusai) (1760-1849).

Hokkei (Iwakubo Kinyemon). Hokusai's best pupil.

Sadakagé, Sadafusa, and Sadanobu, the Osaka group.

Yeisen (Keisai) (1789-1848).

The carp, No. 126, is a good example of the strength of this dissipated artist's work.

Shunsen (Katsugawa).

Yoshitoshi (Yonéjiro) (*d.* 1892).

Kyōsai (Shōjō) (1831-1889).

Toshikata

Shuntei (Miyagawa) } present day.

Gekkō (Ogata)

Hiroshigé (Ichiriusai) (1796-1858).

Of this great landscapist we give several illustrations. Plate VI. represents a characteristic country scene, where although the moon has risen some time weary travellers and peasants and their still wearier horses are still at work. Children only have playtime in which to ride the dogs. No. 143 is one of a much sought after set of eight views of Yédo (*Yédo Kinko Hakkei*). In this the autumn moon is seen rising over one of the Tamagawa (p. 194). No. 113 gives on a fan another characteristic Japanese scene, namely the morning mists hanging over the river at Ocha no Midzu. No. 144 is one of the rarest of Hiroshigé's prints, namely the well-known Saru hashi or Monkey Bridge in the Kiso Mountains.

Hiroshigé II. (Shigenobu).



No. 143.—Autumn Moon on the Tamagawa. By Ichiriusai Hiroshige.

Japanese colour prints are distinguished for a remarkable anomaly as regards value. Whilst in Japan until very recently they were considered as of little worth in comparison with other articles such as lacquer, in other parts of the world they are the one branch that has risen to extravagant prices—prices sober-minded persons consider altogether beyond their worth. But these prices have been paid by the Directors of Museums and other astute persons who do not expend the limited means at their disposal unless they feel well assured that they will in the future either be unobtainable or at enhanced prices. The following prices asked and obtained at The Fine Art Society's Exhibition in 1910 give some idea of what rare and fine impressions command.

*Utamaro*.—"The Hours," twelve sheets illustrating the periods into which the day is divided, £275. "The Silkworm," print of twelve sheets, the only known example of a print running to this number, often forged, £300.

*Hokusai*.—Ten small prints of birds and flowers, very brilliant proofs (see No. 108), £200.

*Hiroshige*.—"The Monkey Bridge" (No. 144), £100.

Whilst this is so, there is unfortunately no branch of Japanese Art that an ignorant person may go so wrong with, as hardly a week passes that I am not asked for an opinion concerning specimens that have been acquired in the erroneous hope and belief that they are treasures. Almost nine-tenths of the colour prints that one sees in shop windows have no value artistically or otherwise. Forgeries too of the work of masters of the craft not only abound but are imitations so wonderful that only a Japanese could have created them. The black and white block can by photography be absolutely copied, and as the colour schemes of the originals vary with almost every impression, old paper can be procured and worm holes imitated, it is not difficult to produce results that few experts could declare with certainty to be forgeries. Hence in buying it certainly behoves a person not only



OTANI ONIJI (ACTOR). *By Toshinsai Sharaku.*





No. 144.—The Saru hashi (Monkey Bridge) in the Kiso Mountains.

*By Hiroshige*



to deal with a seller who knows what he is selling, but one whose word can be trusted.

This chapter cannot close without some notice of Hokusai to whom this volume is largely indebted for many of its most *à propos* illustrations. Without the outcome of his facile brush there would have been a great difficulty to illustrate the life of the middle and lower orders of Japan at its most interesting period. Like all reformers he has both admirers and detractors who, on the one hand, perhaps, give him too high a place amongst the artists of his country, but on the other, depreciate him far below his worth. His deserts have still to be recognised in Japan, for undoubtedly he ranks with the foremost caricaturists of all time. Amongst those of British origin Charles Keene and Phil May may be placed alongside but not before him. Any of our illustrations would testify to this, but taking one at random, No. 127, which I have designated *The Critics*, see the self-satisfied expression of the artist working with two brushes (Hokusai was fond of delineating this feat), all expressed in the line of the mouth, the admiration of one and the superciliousness of the other critic, probably himself an artist.



No. 145 —Ramma—Wild Geese. *Design by Koyetsu. Seventeenth Century.*

### CHAPTER III

#### SCULPTURE IN WOOD AND IVORY



No. 146.—Shaka. *From a Shrine. (Author's Collection.)*

A STORY comes from the St Louis Exposition where Japan was very worthily represented, that an American clergyman, seeing a fine carved ivory group, exclaimed with much satisfaction and pride, "See what Christianity has done for the Japanese." Had he said Religion he would have been nearer the mark and certainly humbled in spirit. For glyptic Art like most other branches was born, fostered, and educated in the service of Buddhism, that creed not only decorating its shrines from ceiling to floor but

calling for images and idols in every variety of material, not only for the temple but the home. Thus occupation was given to a large body of artists who by an unwritten law were mainly enlisted from the higher grades of society.

It has been said by a well-known expert<sup>1</sup> that Japan's

<sup>1</sup> Anderson's Introduction to Murray's "Handbook to Japan," first edition.



No. 147.—Statue of Kwanon.  
*Sixth Century.*

sculptors are much below the level of their Indian, Chinese, and Korean models from which they derived their ideas.

It is with diffidence that I venture to differ from such an authority, especially as my knowledge of this Art in the countries named is limited, but judging from the reproductions given in the monumental work on the Japanese Temples and their treasures, published by the Department of the Interior, and the examples shown in the great display at Paris in 1900, the Japanese would appear to have divested their prototypes of a southern sensuousness and invested them with dignity, grace, and where permissible vitality. I can only illustrate my contention here by one or two examples. The first (No. 147) is a noble and impressive statue of Kwanon which is assigned as far back as the sixth century. It is of wood, some 6½ feet high, the head-dress being of pierced metal with a design of creeping plants. It is preserved in the Horyuji Temple, Yumédomo.

A larger and more virile example of the early sculptors is the terra-cotta statue (No.



No. 148.—Tamonten—Terra-cotta Statue. *Eighth Century.*

148), which is one of four representing the Shi Tenno in the Todaiji temple at Nara, and which it is believed date from the eighth century. Tamonten was the Tenno of the north, and in this capacity held command over vast cohorts and guarded the way for Buddha. Originally the statue was painted, the cuirass being of gold. It is cotemporaneous in date with the famous Daibutsu



No. 149.—Statuette of Ikkiu osho. (*Sir C. H. Read.*)

of Nara, and it shows to what a stage sculpture early arrived, for such a work to be constructed in dried clay.

As an example of later work showing nobility of pose and individuality I show the lacquered statuette of the sixteenth century belonging to Sir Hercules Read of a Buddhist priest Ikkiu osho (No. 149). Photography does not do justice to the refinement of the tiny statuette reproduced in No. 146 and which I know ranks for grace with

Greek work of the best period. It carries us down to a later date, viz., the seventeenth century, when, by an edict issued in 1617 by Hidétada, every house had to contain the image of a deity, a decree which may well have been promulgated as much in the interests of Art as of religion. From it doubtless originated many of the little shrines which come to this country and of which the cases (*zushir*) are often interesting examples of lacquer, being highly decorated in their interior with gold-foil and paintings and on the outside with metal mountings, some of which have come from the hands of the Gotō. I hardly agree with Captain Brinkley's protest against their incongruity as objects for collection. No one would treat them with a lack of reverence, nor have I ever found a Japanese who regarded mine as out of place; besides from the many forms of deities represented they have an interest apart from any question of artistic excellence. The figurines themselves often suggest to a wonderful degree the "majestic serenity and passionless repose" which the sculptors naturally have more easily impressed upon their larger productions.

It is with these opuscula, as they might well be termed, that I have principally to do, for the larger examples seldom, if ever, come within the purview of collectors outside of Japan, whilst *okinono* and *netsuké* are the possessions of thousands.

Hidétada's edict was probably the cause of the last-named taking its present shape. In this wise: it was the introduction of tobacco, some time in the sixteenth century, which largely added to its fabrication. The edict must have created a numerous body of craftsmen, who it is probable were not many years in supplying a demand which once met would not be constant. Nothing, therefore, is more likely than they should, perhaps at first in their leisure moments, and afterwards through lack of work, ornament the piece of wood or metal which had hitherto done duty as a *netsuké* to the tobacco-pouch hanging at their girdle. The Japanese never allows anything with

which he has to do to go long unornamented, and therefore as a matter of course this article soon received attention at the decorator's hands, the ornamentation taking the form of a flat pattern of a conventional or floral character. But, as it happened, the human figure was first taken hold of and adopted, although it could not by any means have been considered the best, as most assuredly it was not the most suitable, for the purpose. My suggestion, therefore, is that it is to the image-maker's lack of employment that we owe the *netsuké* in its most frequent form, and this receives some confirmation from the fact that the first *netsuké* professional maker, Nonozuchi Ryuho, who died in 1670, was thirteen years of age when the Images Edict was put in force, and was in his prime when the demand for them probably failed.<sup>1</sup>

There is no section of Japanese Art which succeeds in attracting the attention of everybody who is brought into contact with it, so much as that which is comprised under the heading of *netsuké*<sup>2</sup> carvings. Enthusiasts have gone so far as to compare them to the Tanagra figures of Greek origin, and to the finest sculptors of the Gothic age, and to assert that a first-rate *netsuké* has no rivals. This praise is perhaps not too high if we take care to emphasise the word "first-rate."

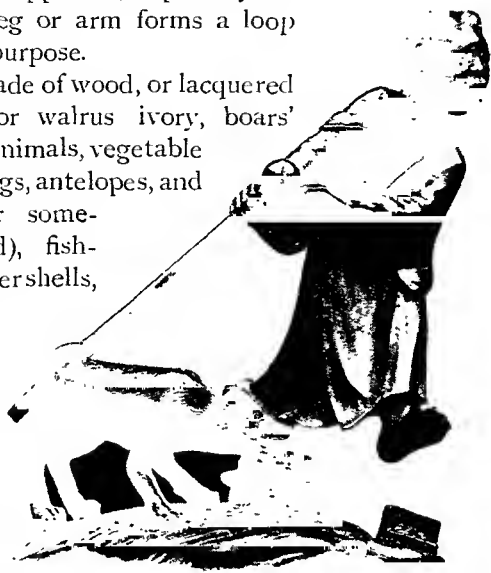
Until very recently a *netsuké* was a term which included in the minds of foreigners every carving below a certain size. In reality a *netsuké* is a toggle affixed by a cord to the tobacco pouch, the pipe case, or the *inrō*, to prevent it from slipping through the sash or waistband, and as long as it was utilised as a toggle it never lost its original idea, or its form; so that whenever we see a *netsuké* without compactness, or with extraneous excrescences which would catch the folds of the dress, or break off, it may be taken for certain that it is of modern date and has been made for the outside market.

<sup>1</sup> It was the *netsuké*-makers in the eras of Kambun and Empō (1661-1680) who were the forerunners of the talented ivory carvers of to-day.

<sup>2</sup> In pronunciation the *u* is here as always almost silent.

The mark which distinguishes a *netsuké* from an *okimono* (or ornament to be placed, see p. 274), is the presence of two small holes, usually in the back, which admit of a cord being strung through them, and its age may often be gauged by examining the amount to which the inside edges of these holes have been worn by the constant rubbing of the cord, although even this is imitated. The passage for the cord is sometimes cunningly contrived so as not to be apparent, especially in figures where a leg or arm forms a loop sufficient for the purpose.

*Netsuké* are made of wood, or lacquered wood, elephant or walrus ivory, boars' tusks or teeth of animals, vegetable ivory, horns of stags, antelopes, and oxen (the latter sometimes compressed), fish-bone, walnut or other shells, seapine, jade, metal, porcelain, amber, onyx, coral, and crystal, and even of the red growth found at the top of a crane's head. The oldest are



No. 150.—Okimono: Wood. Blind Shampooer.

those of wood; ivory was only imported in any quantity in the eighteenth century, and it is singular that whilst those made from it are almost always inferior to those carved from wood, they hold the pride of place in the estimation of the majority of collectors. The wood used, which is generally the core of the cherry tree, is softer, more subtle, and less liable to splinter than ivory, and whereas the latter usually fails with age, the wood hardens and acquires a patina of a rich warm hue. Ivories are subjected to soaking in coffee



and all sorts of mixtures to make them assume an antique appearance.

There are two forms of flattened globe-shaped *netsuké*, one *manju* from its resemblance to a rice cake, the other *kagami-buta* from its metal centre enclosed in ivory being like a mirror. Many *netsuké* assume a triangular shape, the reason for which is discussed in my "Evolution of a Netsuké," *Jap. Soc. Trans.*, iii.

Gonse considers that the occupation of a *netsuké*-maker was the monopoly of a certain class of artisans who followed the trade from generation to generation. But it is almost certain that many of them were in a higher station of life, some being dentists who first attained their skill with the chisel whilst carving artificial teeth.

The ancient city of Nara, probably owing to its being a place replete with temples, was for centuries celebrated for its wood-carvers, and it was here that many of the most notable *netsuké*-makers lived, and the manufacture is still carried on there. Ōsaka was also the headquarters of a large number, as was Kyōto.

It is impossible to give a list of the most renowned names amongst *netsuké*-carvers. I have been at the trouble to analyse the lists as given in Gonse, Hart, Murray's "Japan," and a catalogue of an Exhibition at The Fine Art Society's, with the result that of some two hundred and fifty names, not ten per cent. recur in all the lists. That in Murray's "Japan" is taken from the *Sōken Kishō*.

The earlier makers whose works are sought after are : Shuzan, Ritsuō, Miwa, Ikkan, Isai, Masanaō, Tomotada, Tadatoshi, Demé Uman, and Demé Jōman,<sup>1</sup> Minkō, Tomochika, Kokei, Yoshinaga, Komin, Masatada, Tomokazu, Masataka, Haruchika, Shugetsu, Isen Itan, and Tomotsugu, whilst Korin and his brother Kenzan added this to their many accomplishments. Nineteenth-century makers are Rantei and Ryukei.

<sup>1</sup> In the *Kokkwa* the names Demé Uman and Jōman are read Sukémitsu and Takémitsu. The *Sōken Kishō*, however, gives them in *katakana* as above. See also "Netsuké" by Brockhaus.

Yoshimasa Shuzan lived at Nara towards the close of the seventeenth century. Authentic examples of his work are very rare, and very few, if any, of those that bear his name are genuine. The *Sōken Kishō* contains a number of drawings after his *netsuké*, and the demon attached to the pouch ornament (No. 151) is similar to one of them, and is stated by experts to be a Shuzan, but the work has to my mind too finished an appearance, and is in too good a state of preservation for the date assigned to it; the signature Shuzan is affixed to a number of brightly coloured figurines which do not pretend to be of ancient date and the authorship to others from which time has almost erased the traces of colouring of a style which was affected by the master.

The Miwa family came from Yédo. The *netsuké* of the first maker of this name are held in high esteem and are of great rarity, and it is probably also the case with his *netsuké* that few of those which pass current as his are actually so. It is said that Miwa sometimes coloured his *netsuké*, but of this there is little evidence; his subjects were invariably figures. The spirited *okimono* of Shoki (No. 152) is said to be by Miwa.

There is a class of ivory *netsuké* about which little is known by experts, namely, the tall, archaic, stiff, oddly dressed figures from 3 to 6 inches high, much worn as to any projecting surfaces. None are signed. They often represent a Sennin (p. 57), or a figure clad in what is meant to be Dutch costume, and they may probably have been made for the latter market (No. 153). It is said that ivory was first brought, in the shape of a pair of tusks, to Japan to Tokugawa Hidétada by the Dutch in the early seventeenth century.

There are certain artists who are identified with the portrayal of animals, and produced works which leave nothing to be desired. Amongst them Ikkan was noted for his rats, Masanao for fowls and rats, Masatami for his rabbits, Tomotada for his oxen, Tadatoshi for snails, and Tamétaka for wild boars. Sōkwa Héishiro worked at flowers and grasses in baskets.



No. 151.—Pipe Case and Pouch with Netsuké. *By Shūzan.*

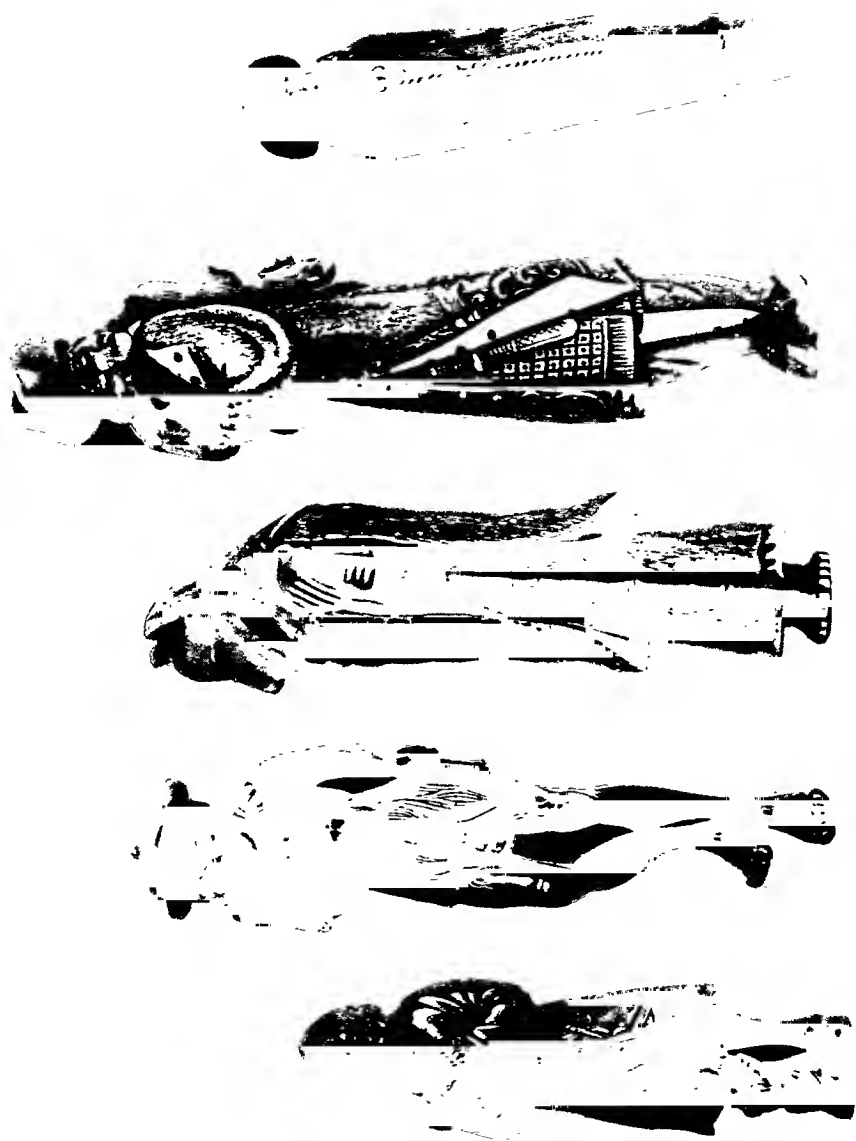


No. 152.—Shōki. *Okimono, Wood Lacquered.*

Those who excelled in figures were Minkoku, Sensai, and Masanao, and in groups Nobuyuki. As Mr Anderson has well said: "The designs of the *netsuké*-carvers embrace the whole range of Japanese motives, and the artist tells his story with the utmost lucidity. Nothing is safe from his humour except, perhaps, the official powers that be, of whom the Japanese citizen has a salutary dread. Religion, history, folk-lore, novels, incidents of daily life, all provide material for his tools, and his subjects are mostly treated in a comic or even flippant vein. The pious Dharma or Daruma (see p. 81), aroused from his nine years' motionless contemplation by the attentions of an obtrusive rat who ventures to nibble the saintly ear, is made to assume an expression suggestive of the strongest equivalent for swearing of which we may suppose a good Buddhist to be capable. The Thunder God (p. 20) is seen extracting the storm-cloud from the basket that gives it stowage-room in idle days of sunshine. An inquisitive bird has unwarily inserted his long beak between the valves of a giant clam whose gaping shell had invited the incautious search after the unknown, and now with straining thighs and flapping wings struggles vainly to regain his liberty. An expectant domestic party surround a fish-kettle, while the head of the family triumphantly extracts a carp of tempting proportions, but the averted heads, disgusted faces, and finger-tweaked noses of the hungry group eloquently proclaim the central idea of Buddhism—the impermanency of all things and the vanity of human wishes. Such examples might be multiplied without end."

It is this variety of subject which gives so great an interest to the collection of these *bibelots*, and which usually leads to their selection more for the incident they illustrate than for their merit as works of art.

The *netsuké*-makers also occupied themselves with the manufacture of toys for the amusement as much of the elder as the younger folk. These consisted of tiny figures (*hina*) carved in wood, dressed in brocade: some had a rounded bottom weighted with lead which necessitated their retain-



No. 153.—Types of Netsuké, four illustrating Dutchmen.

ing their equilibrium and all were for use at the Girls' Festival (p. 160, No. 154).

No. 155 has been introduced here partly in order to show the use of the *netsuké*, which here takes the form of a *Tengu* head, and partly to illustrate how European ornament was occasionally introduced into Japanese work. The design is taken from a piece of old leather paper of Dutch origin. The *Sōken Kishō* contains several engravings of Dutch leather papers, and the one from which the pattern on this *inrō* is taken, and which is given there and called *Ningiode*, evidently



No. 154.—Hina.

found much favour with the Japanese, for I myself have acquired some half-dozen specimens in which it is introduced. The artist in almost every instance, not being content with imitating the design, has japanised it, and also endeavoured to imitate in metal the texture and feel of leather. So too the Demon *netsuké* (No. 151) betrays European influence, as does the warrior in No. 191, but the most curious is the ivory *netsuké* of the Crucifixion (No. 36), which has evidently been accurately copied from an old ivory.<sup>1</sup>

There are few people who have examined even casually any collection of Japanese wares, but must have been struck by the frequent introduction of masks into Japanese Art.

The use of the mask in the drama is another of the many features which connect Japan with Greece. The custom arose from the desire to accentuate either the tragic or the comic expression. In Japan, they can be traced

<sup>1</sup> As regards European influence on the Art of Japan see the author's paper, *Jap. Soc. Trans.*, vol. ii.

back as far as the ninth century. They were at first used for performances called Kagura,<sup>1</sup> which were of a semi-religious character, but in later centuries for theatrical and



No. 155.—Inrō : Papiermache. Adaptation of European Design.  
(From the Collection of Mrs Dobson.)

Court usages also, the performances or dances taking the names of *Bugaku* and *Nō*. Their use has practically fallen

<sup>1</sup> For an account of this dance see "Around the World through Japan," 234.



into desuetude, although representations are still given in certain aristocratic families, who have handed down the art for centuries. Hokusai in his *Mangwa* gives two plates of typical masks with names attached.

*Netsuké* collectors will hardly find their collection complete without one or two masks; those which are most sought after are the work of the family of Demé, especially Demé Uman and Demé Jōman, who confined themselves to this subject, and attained to such distinction as to receive the title *Wakasa Hogen*.

We must not forget whilst treating of ivory work to



No. 156.—Masks. By *Karasugi Hisahiko*.

mention the name of one who introduced into Japan the art of decorating ivory with incrustations of mother-of-pearl, coloured ivory, metal-work, coral, etc. Shibayama or Dōshō (the former being his family name) lived at the commencement of the nineteenth century, and a good example of his work should find a place in all collections. Care must, however, be taken not to select one overcharged with ornament, such as those he produced late in life, and which his successors have issued in quantities.

Nineteenth-century *netsuké* carvers include the following: Rantei, Ryukei, Kwaigyokusai, Tomochika, Ranmei,

Ryomin, Araku, Gyokuhosai, Masakazu, Masatomo, Rakumin, Masatsuné, Tadayoshi, Setsusai, Sukenaga, Shigemasa, Mitsuhiro, Kagetoshi, Hojitsu, Jugyoku, Ikosai, Masanobu, Hidemasa, Joso, Soyo, Hidechika, and Tokoku. The last named is still working although nearing seventy.

Sculpture suffered the same eclipse at the Restoration as other branches of the Arts. There were at that date



No. 157.—Tsuba of Masks. *Kōrai School.*

artists of note such as Takahashi Hōun and Takamura Tōun, Buddhist sculptors, who had carried on the old traditions, but for many years artistic demand was absolutely stayed and it was not until the demands of tourists and the outside world arose that a revival set in. Then the *netsuké* of the preceding eras were exported in such numbers that the country soon became bare of them and the foreign dealers asked for more and for

figures of greater importance than *netsuké*. Every carver who had lost his trade, whether as a maker of masks, shrines, or Buddhist statues, came to his own again, and

in the late seventies and eighties a high level of artistic excellence was reached by such men as Takamura Kōun, Asahi Gyokusan, Ishikawa Kiméi, and Shimamura Shumméi, the heads of the profession.

As evidence of the change that had to take place in the aspirations of artists the following may be mentioned of Kōun who had been brought up as a carver (*Bussshi*) of Buddhist images. When the demand was stayed, he at once turned his attention elsewhere, and shocked the feelings of his fellows by carving a Japanese pug (*chin*).



No. 158. —Wandering Minstrel. *Ivory Statuette.*  
*Kaneda Kinjiro.*

But it was the first stepping-stone to a place as the head of his profession, for it was awarded a gold medal when exhibited, was purchased for the imperial household,

and was the means of his being appointed a Court artist.

Later on the establishment of sculpture classes in the colleges under Europeans and the sojourn of Japanese in



No. 159.—Boys at Play. *Wood Carving.* Yamazaki Chōun.

Italy gave even greater impetus to the Art, which, from the nature of the manner of representation, namely, in the round instead of the flat, could more readily be assimilated to foreign ideas. Italy perhaps was not the best mistress, as her ideas in sculpture aim at trickiness and show rather than dignity and nobility of form. Her influence was clearly seen in much of the sculpture at the Japan-British Exhibition where the types were far too reminis-



No. 160.—An Archer. *Clay Model by Hiragushi Denchū.*

cent of the "Dirty Boy" school. Still, they were in many respects notable for a very vital rendering of popular life.

Amongst sculptors of the last twenty years may be mentioned the following who have for the most part studied in Italy, and are or have been professors at the Tōkyō Art School: Kōun the animal sculptor already mentioned; Takéuchi Kyūichi and Kōseki of Kyōto, still carvers of Buddhist objects; Asahi Gyokusan, famous for his

carving of skulls; Fujita Bunzō, Okuma Ujihiro, Nagatsuma Shukéi, Ishikawa Mitsuaki, Yonehara Unkai, who executed the first statue of a European to be honoured by Japan, viz., Jenner; Yamazaki Chōun (No. 159), Shinkai Takejiro, Yoshida Homéi, Kaneda Kinjiro (the author of No. 158), and Ogura Masako (a woman). Of workers in terra-cotta may be mentioned Mimita Ichiga.

Marble statuary is still rarely seen, but plaster is used and also clay for modelling even by workers in ivory (No. 160). Marble has, however, been found in the country near Mito, and has been used by Ogura Sōjirō, although bronze is mostly employed for anything large. Modern bronzes will be treated in the chapter on Metal-work.

Of the *netsuké* illustrated here, Hadésu (p. 31) is by Shiunkosai, Jurō (p. 62) by Kokura, the Treasure Ship (p. 64) by Shohosai, Kiyohimé (p. 69) by Masa-ichi, Shōki (p. 71) by Ichichodzu, The Temple Bell (p. 75) by Choki, The Badger Tea-kettle (p. 92) by Senroku, The Tanuki (p. 166) by Toyoichi.



160A.—The Sculptors. After Hokusai.

## CHAPTER IV

### LACQUER

“To show a really fine piece of lacquer to one of the uncultivated natives of Europe or America is, as the Japanese proverb says, ‘like giving guineas to a cat.’”—*Chamberlain’s “Things Japanese.”*

**F**OREMOST amongst the wares for which Japan is celebrated is lacquer, in the manufacture of which it stands practically alone. It has been an industry there beyond the ken of man. Before the Christian era there is said to have been an officer whose business it was to superintend its production at the Mikado’s Court, and specimens more than a thousand years old are in existence. With such antiquities it is almost useless to deal here, as examples of that age are likely to be seen or acquired by very few of my readers, although an opportunity was afforded at the Paris Exhibition of 1900 of inspecting some very early pieces. I give two illustrations: No. 161, a copy of a box in the Nara Treasury, dating from the seventh century, and which was facsimiled by Zéshin, the finest of the nineteenth-century lacquerists, and the other (No. 162) of a perfume box made in the fourteenth century out of a tube of a Buddhist roll Bible, which dated back to the eighth century: it is of gold lac, decorated in *togidashi*, and represents the Chinese Emperor Buwō going to visit the tomb of his father Bunnō.

The manufacture of lac is described in most books of reference, but the accounts have all originated in a Parliamentary Blue-Book by Consul Quin, issued in 1880 at a cost of twopence, where it is set out at great length. The following notes are founded upon it.

Wood is the usual basis of lacquered articles, and unless mention is made to the contrary it must be assumed to be so here.

The various pieces of wood of which the article is to



No. 161. —Facsimile by Zeshin of Seventh-Century Lacquer Box  
in the Nara Treasury.

be composed are first cut and fitted; these are often no thicker than a sheet of paper. Any interstices there may be in the grain or the joints are filled with a composition of powdered stone or chopped hemp, which answers to our system of priming. It is needless to say that the wood,



which is usually *hinoki* (cedar) or *honoki* (magnolia), has been seasoned and dried. How carefully this was done in the past is evident from the fact that an old piece is hardly ever encountered which shows signs of shrinkage or warping. Boxes made two hundred years ago are as perfect in this respect as the day when they issued from



No. 162.—Perfume Box. *Eighth-Century Lacquer.*

the hands of their producer. One formerly in my possession was only a fair sample of such work, where a tray in the interior would rest upon the compressed air, which could not escape, so perfectly did it fit. I am sorry to say that this fact oftentimes elicited more of my friends' interest than the artistic workmanship which was everywhere evident in the piece. This marvellous construction is even more

strikingly exhibited in the joining of the various compartments of the *innō*, or medicine case, where each section not only fits as if it had been made by the most accurately devised machine, but is capable of transposition with its fellows.

But to return to the details of the construction. After the fittings of the joints have set firmly, all excrescences are ground down with a whetstone, and the whole is covered with a thick coat composed of a mixture of powdered and burnt clay and varnish, which, when dry, is again smoothed down with the stone. This done, the article is in most cases covered with silk, hempen cloth, or paper, which is pasted on with the utmost care, so that neither crease nor joint is seen. The texture of the cloth can, however, be distinguished on many even of the finest pieces if held so as to allow the light to reflect from them. The piece then receives from one to five thin coats of the clay and varnish mixture, each being allowed ample time to dry. The surface having been made perfectly smooth by use of the whetstone, the process of lacquering commences, a spatula at first and afterwards a thin flat brush of human hair being used to lay it on. Space will not allow mention of the numerous differences which attend the laying on, polishing, and drying of the different layers of lac,<sup>1</sup> until the final coat is reached, which requires to be put on with cotton wool with the utmost delicacy, and is at once almost rubbed off with soft paper; this, when dry, is polished with deer's horn ashes reduced to an impalpable powder and applied with the finger.<sup>2</sup> Enough has been said to show the unexampled care which has attended the process and the time which all this takes—the drying alone of a good

<sup>1</sup> Lac is not a varnish in the usual acceptation of the word, but the sap of the *Rhus vernicifera*, which contains about 85 per cent. of urushic acid,  $2\frac{1}{4}$  per cent. of a nitrogenous substance, rather more than 3 per cent. of a gum soluble in water, like gum arabic, and the rest water. The quantity of urushi (lacquer) produced throughout the empire in 1909 was 67,000 Kwan (Kwan=8 $\frac{1}{4}$  lbs. avoird.).

<sup>2</sup> It is a common error to suppose that the polish on lac is effected by varnish; it is entirely by the polishing just described.

piece requiring, up to this point, under the most favourable circumstances, 530 hours !

But we have as yet only got as far as the preparation of the background. There has still to be added to this the superstructure of decoration, whether it be in gold, silver, mother-of-pearl, or a variety of metals. The metallic dusts or powders used for this are infinite in variety of composition, size, weight, and shape, are all distinguished by the Japanese workmen by different names, and each is brought into his service in accordance with rules long ago formed for him by the experience of his ancestors.

The most oft recurring form of decorated lac is that popularly known as *avanturine*, from its resemblance to the aventurine Venetian glass. Its correct name is *nashiji*, from its supposed likeness to the spotted rind of a pear (*nashi*). It consists in covering with particles of gold dust the ground until it assumes, as the French say, a "crushed barley-sugar" appearance. In this latter process great skill is required to attain a perfectly even distribution of the flakes ; when done this is covered with coatings of a fine transparent lacquer, often amounting to a dozen in number. *Nashiji* is usually made either of pure gold, gold and silver, or pure silver, but there are seven degrees of fineness in each.

*Giobunashiji* (said to be named after the inventor, who lived in the early part of the eighteenth century) is where small squares of gold leaf, called *kirikané* (or torn gold leaf), are used instead of the powdered gold ; but this style is found in pieces of much earlier date. In designs where it is finely carried out, it is wonderful to observe the regularity with which each of these squares has been laid, especially when, as is often the case, they diminish in size : a similar method of work is sometimes to be found in minute pieces of mother-of-pearl. Each piece is applied separately by means of a thin-pointed bamboo stick.

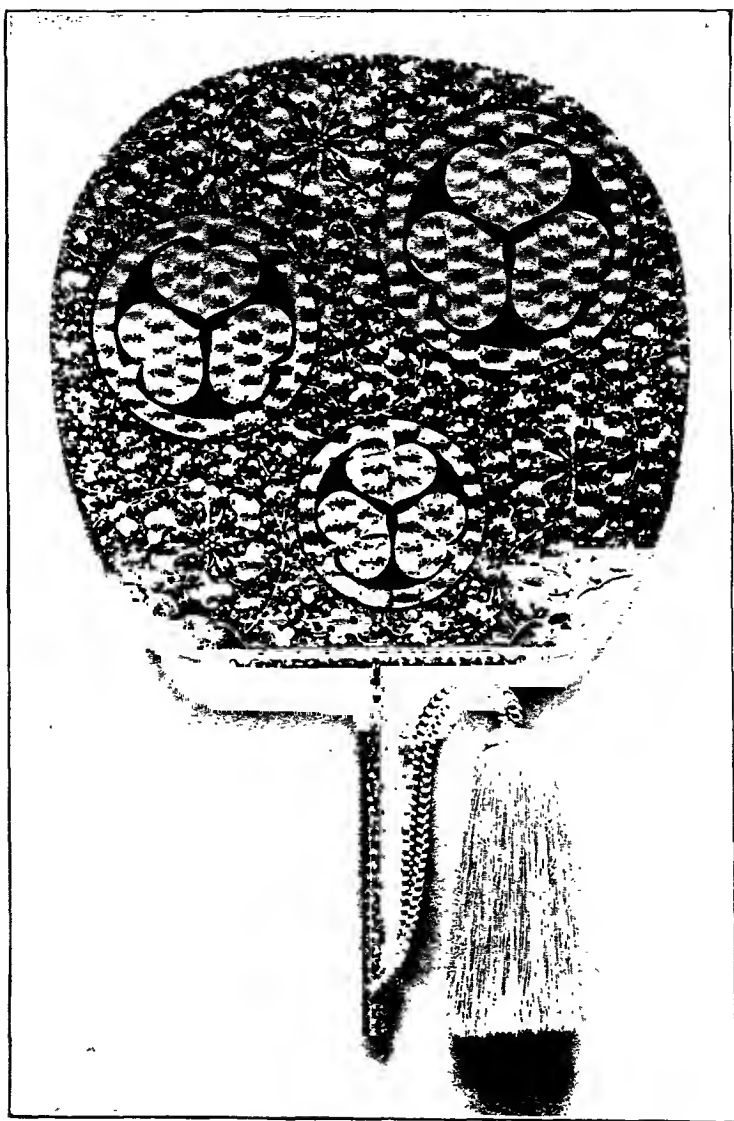
*Togidashi* (polished-out) is where the pattern is the result of grinding and polishing. The design is transferred

to the lacquer by means of a paper upon which the lines are traced with a slow-drying lacquer; this, when in position, is emphasised by a little fine white powder, and then gilt, those portions which have to come brightest being raised above those of a lower tone by means of a coating of a thick stiff lacquer and gold dust. When dry, all portions of the ground or pattern which yet require gilding are covered with lacquer and then dusted with gold; this, when dry, is again twice lacquered and thoroughly dried. The surface is then rubbed down until the gold design begins to show itself. Great care has to be taken so as to prevent injury to the gold during the numerous coatings and grindings which are necessary until the pattern shows up satisfactorily through the glaze; when this is accomplished it has still to be polished.

The name *hiramakiyé* (flat-gold lacquered) is applied to all lacs where the design is not raised above the surface more than the thickness of the lines. Details and transparent effects are usually produced by graduated or softened-off dustings of metal. The skill consists in so distributing the powders as to secure the exact proportions and shadings. In fine examples a mistake as to this never occurs. This process is often combined with *takamakiyé* (relief-gold lacquered), where the surface is raised or indented. In both processes the groundwork has to be entirely finished before the ornamentation is commenced. Low relief is accomplished by dusting the design in wet lacquer with fine camellia charcoal powder; for high relief *sabi* (a mixture of burnt clay and lac varnish) is used; both when dry undergo various polishings and grindings.

Other sorts of lacquer requiring notice are *tsuishû* (red), and *tsuikoku* (black), where the design is carved out of a thick coating of lac.<sup>1</sup> But the most remarkable work in this way is *Guri* lac, where the body of the work is formed of superimposed layers of various coloured lacs,

<sup>1</sup> *Surihagashi* or rubbed, where a red coat over black is rubbed in places exposing the black. *Ruden* where there is an inlay of *awabi* shell and gold tesserae.



No. 163.—Fan. *Daimyō Lac.* With Tokugawa Badge.

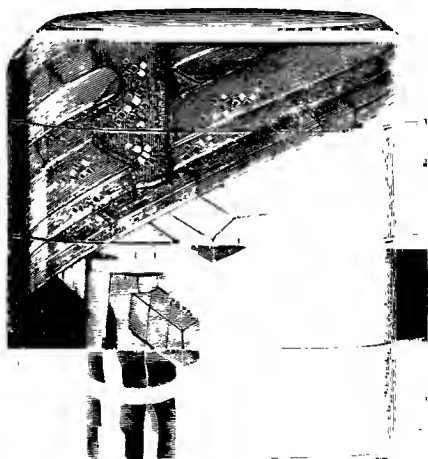
through which designs, usually consisting of flowing curves, are cut in V-shaped incisions, sometimes to the depth of a quarter of an inch, thus exposing the layers. Fine pieces of this lac are not common, but it is frequently imitated by colouring the sides of the incision so as to resemble the layers. A good magnifying glass will usually enable the imposture to be detected.<sup>1</sup> Yosei (1650-1670) introduced from China a practice of carving *Guri* lac into landscapes and figures, utilising the different coloured layers to represent different planes or portions of the picture. Heijiuro (1596-1615) was the great master of *Guri* lac.

*Chinkinbori* dates no farther back than the early part of the eighteenth century, when it was copied from the Chinese. It is similar to dry-point etching, and consists in incising the pattern in fine lines into the body of the lac with a graver or rat's tooth, and filling up the incisions with powdered gold.

Mention must also be made of works in monochrome, where the pattern is in the same colour as the ground; black is a favourite colour and the result is thoroughly artistic. Koma Kwansai excelled in this.

One word more. The late Mr E. Gilbertson, the possessor of over a thousand pieces of lac, and an indefatigable student of the subject, gave me the following note of warning upon the processes as set forth in the text-books:

<sup>1</sup> I may remark upon the value of this instrument in the examination of Japanese manufactures, especially metal-work. Desirable specimens should always stand its test.



No. 164.—Inrō. Signed Honnami Kōyetsu.

"I suspect that there are, however, great varieties in the modes of manufacture. Probably every eminent master had his own peculiar method of producing certain effects. Usually I find a certain order of processes recorded in the text-books, without, apparently, the least suspicion that they apply only to certain classes of articles. I have dissected various specimens of lacquer, with the result of discovering that these descriptions were altogether inapplicable to *inrō*, and I believe also many other sorts of lacquer. I learned, moreover, that there is a great difference in the treatment of objects of the same class by different makers; in fact, all the descriptions of the art of lacquering can do no more than give a general idea of the processes employed."

Those who care to see the materials of which lacquer is made, and specimens in various states of manufacture, can do so in the Museum at Kew. These include sections of the tree from which the lac exudes, the lacs themselves of various colours, from light grey, green, and yellow, to brown and black;<sup>1</sup> the hempen cloth, silk, and paper in which the object is cased, the clays and colours used, the stones, brushes, tools, and even the drying press. Then there are several plaques showing the processes of *togidashi*, *takamakiyē*, and the manufacture of the *nashiji* or avanturine ground; in this latter there are bands of four different kinds of avanturine (presumably gold, and silver in two mixtures, and silver), and it is curious to observe how little difference there is between them upon completion, the yellowness of the superimposed lacs having made them all of the same barley-sugar hue. There is also a case showing fifty various methods of lacquering sword-sheaths, but it is placed too high for study. These illustrations would be more useful for study at the Victoria and Albert Museum.

Until the opening up of Japan in the fifties, the only

<sup>1</sup> Jet black arises either from acetate of iron and water having been mixed with the lacquer, or finely powdered charcoal dust, or lampblack.

specimens of Japanese lacquer known in Europe were the few pieces which found their way out of the country in the cargoes of wares which the Dutch settlers were allowed to export. How few these were is shown by a search through the records of the eighteenth century, which contain entries to the following effect: that eleven ships sailed in one year, carrying 16,580 pieces of porcelain and 12 pieces of lac. The reason for this was that its exportation was forbidden. There were collectors of it even in those times, amongst whom Madame de Pompadour (who expended 110,000 livres upon it) and Marie Antoinette were the most notable. The latter's collection, of about one hundred pieces, is in the Louvre, and M. Gonse states that there is hardly a single one which is not of an inferior quality. The most notable pieces of this sort in this country were those included in the Hamilton collection, of which two of the most notable passed into that of Sir Trevor Laurence.

In the early days of European collecting, collectors would talk about, and have nothing but, "Daimyō" lac. Many of them had but a vague idea of what was included in that term, but they made it all embracing, as they well could do, for there are probably few sorts of lac which were not at one time or another made for the great princes. I have asked many collectors and Japanese experts what they meant by the term, and all have differed. But the majority would appear to confine it to the large pieces of furniture which were made for the Daimyō's actual use, and to the smaller pieces ornamented with diaper or flowing patterns of a formal nature, and, usually, the badges of the owner. The fan (No. 163) has a thoroughly Daimyō-esque design. The *shochikubai* (pine, bamboo, and prunus), which so often recurs, may be said almost to come under the category of a Daimyō pattern.

The oldest lac with any approach to artistic quality which comes into the foreign market is that which is known as *Kamakurabori*, so called from the city of that name, the ancient capital of the Shōguns (see p. 34). Old

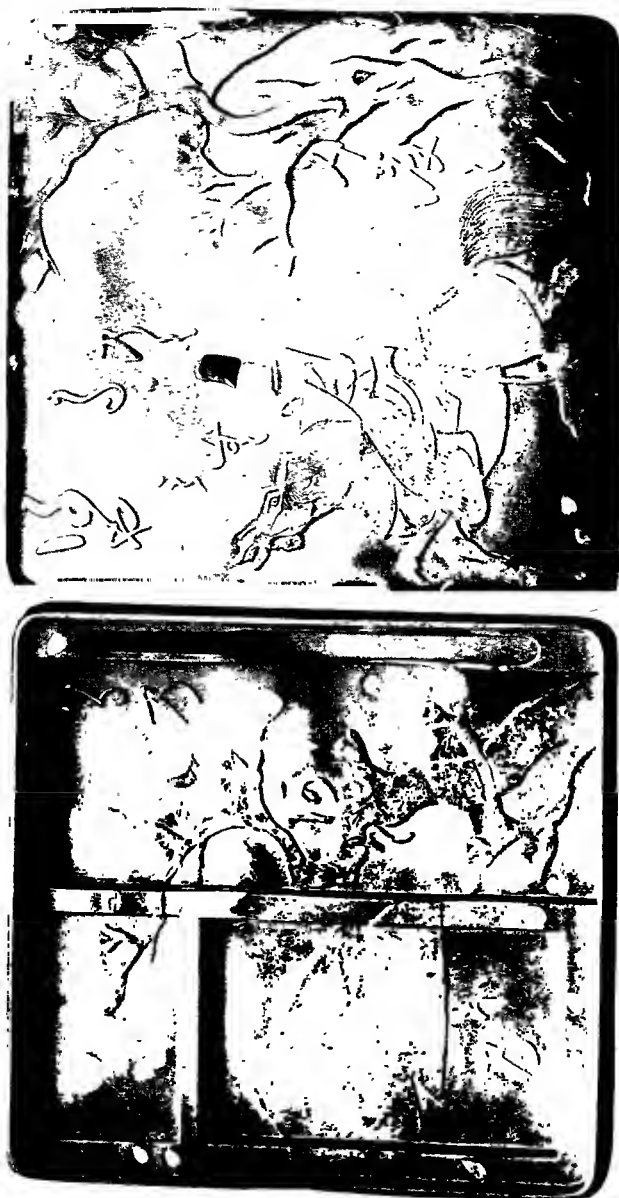


specimens of this are not frequent, but I once encountered half-a-dozen examples in a collection sent over from Japan for sale. They consisted for the most part of figures rather rudely carved, covered with a thick coating of red lac over black, which shows through with age.

There is a class of small perfume boxes of a circular shape also to be met with. They are characterised by solidity (their rims being cased in pewter), and the variety in size and uneven mosaicing of the *Giobu* squares. They must be included amongst the oldest specimens of lacquer which come over here, some of them dating back to the fourteenth century. No. 106, of a *susuribako* once in my possession, has many evidences of being of this date.

Probably the earliest artist in lac whose work is recognisable by the ordinary collector is Honnami Kōyetsu. The date of his birth and death are known (1556-1637), and he was fortunate in passing the last twenty years of his life under the Tokugawa dynasty, which brought in an era of taste and refinement. Kōyetsu's family were not lacquerists but experts in sword blades. He had manifold excellencies, including chirography, painting, pottery, and lacquer. His skill in the first named aided him in the decoration of lacquer, and for which he introduced lead, tin, and mother-of-pearl (No. 164). He remained at Kyōtō when the rest of the Art world moved to Yédo on the accession of Iyémitsu, and he gathered round him a school, chief amongst whom was Tsuchida Soyetsu, himself the originator of new methods. He lived in the seventeenth century, attained to a great age—in the Gilbertson collection are two *inrōs*, upon which are statements that they were executed in the eighty-second and eighty-fourth years of his age; the lac has turned brown and semi-transparent.

The *susuribako* illustrated in No. 165, dating from the seventeenth century, is a copy by Kōrin of a work by his master, Honnami Kōyetsu. It represents a cherry fête in the park of the Lord of Shyunsei, and is inscribed with a poem.



No. 165.—Suzuribako. Copy by Kōrin of Honnami Kōchōsu.

No. 117 shows a form of early *inrō* of a distinctive character where small metal ornaments, often by the Gotōs, are placed upon the surface of the lacquer. These pieces usually date from the seventeenth century.

Pieces made about this period are reproduced in Nos. 32 and 33. The tray (No. 32) belonged to Asano, wife of Toyotomi Hidéyoshi, and was bequeathed by her to the temple of Kōdaiji which was the mausoleum of her husband. It bears the Pawlonia *mon* of the family of Bayoromi. The so-called *Hatsunéno Tēbako* in the Imperial Museum at Tōkyō (No. 33) is one of several boxes that formed part of the accessories to *etageres* belonging to the Marquis Yōshinori Tokugawa. It is the work also of Kōami Nagashigé. The beautiful writing box belonging to Mr Yamamoto of Kyōto (No. 111) and which was shown in the Paris Exposition of 1900 is also an early seventeenth-century piece of beautiful design illustrating the autumn full moon seen behind autumn flowers and foliage.

A lacquerer of great distinction, founder of a school, who lived in the seventeenth century, and with whose works we are fairly familiar, was Koma Kiuhaku. Authentic specimens of his work are somewhat rare, although he lived to an old age. He produced a coloured lac finely dusted with gold and rubbed down: it shows in some lights a metallic lustre, in others a brilliant coloured surface. Red under gold was the most usual form of this. He was noted, too, for his Koma red, which has a steely look in certain lights due to an infusion of gold. The Koma excelled in *hira-makiyé*. Koma Kiuhaku who died in 1715 had a son, Yasutaka, who continued his father's work, and the school is still in existence, the most noted member being Koma Kwansai, who attained a high distinction in the eighteenth century. Other Koma of note were Bunsai, Koriu, Yasutada, and Yasunari.

Many are the masters assigned to the most famous of all the lacquerists, Kōrin. He was Kyōto born (1661-1716) and certainly owed much to Kōyetsu, and somewhat to Koma. The Tosa School claim him as a pupil in painting

of Gukei Sumiyoshi and the Kanō of Tsunenobu. Whoever it may have been it is patent that all or any of these must give place to the great teacher Nature from whom he learnt most of the traits that distinguishes his art from that of any one else. Kōrin, as we have seen, was also an artist of great distinction with the brush, and his designs with the former are notable for their originality and freedom from convention. The same applies to his works in lacquer, in which the treatment is almost repellent by its vigour, and upon such a material as fine lac often appears out of place.

Kōrin was the first to use mother-of-pearl and pewter to any great extent in decoration. It had been employed for several centuries as a preservative to the edges of the pieces but is only found very rarely in decoration of an earlier period. He also used tin and lead. One distinguishing mark between the master and his imitators is in the gold; in both, the gold will probably be laid on very thickly, but in the master's case it will be found to be of a rich red hue, pleasant and soft in tone, as opposed to a sickly yellow; it should be noticed that Kōrin's gold is often full of minute specks which resemble gilded grains of sand.

There is nothing so much sought after by the many collectors as a fine example of Kōrin's work. Anderson was of opinion that "to those who have learned to understand his aim, there appears a strength of character rarely apparent in the resplendent work of later years. As a decorative artist, he will always be a genius for the few, a charlatan for the many" ("Pictorial Art," p. 137). Gilbertson, one of our best judges, considered that "his productions are the eccentricities of a genius; in the hands of his imitators their absurdities stare one in the face too palpably; his style consequently soon disappeared, and deservedly so, for that reason."

The French collectors, however, who seldom err in judgment, all favour Kōrin. The set of boxes (*tébako*), of which one is illustrated in No. 166, are considered to be

Kōrin's masterpiece and come from the Imperial Museum, Tōkyō. Kōrin was very wont to illustrate the subject depicted upon them, namely, the Yatsuhashi or the "Eight Bridges," the name of a place in Mikawa where there was a stream renowned for its irises. Narihira the poet (see p. 9)



No. 166. — Tébakō. By Kōrin. Imperial Museum, Tōkyō.

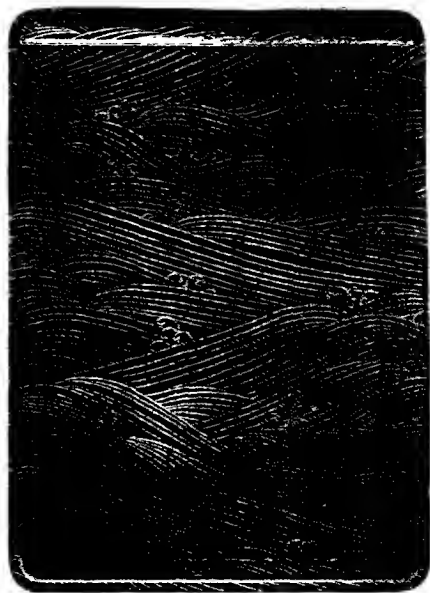
first wrote of it, and has been followed by many poets and artists. On the box the irises are of mother-of-pearl of many hues, the leaves of heavy gold and the bridge of lead. No. 167 shows the wave design with which Kōrin was so enamoured, on a tray in the interior. Our illustration is

from the work on the "Masterpieces of Kōrin," published by the Kokka Company.

An artist, whose work was thoroughly original, although it often shows traces of imperfection, was Ogawa Ritsūō (1662-1746). The box (No. 168) is in brown wood of a coarse grain, the harder portion of which is left in relief, the corners and edges being in black lac with a gilt pattern; the inside and bottom is black lac. The decorations of the cover are in pottery, glazed green, and represent ornamental roof-tiles, one, it will be observed, having the *tomoyé* ornament. The artist's seal, in the lower left corner, is in white pottery.

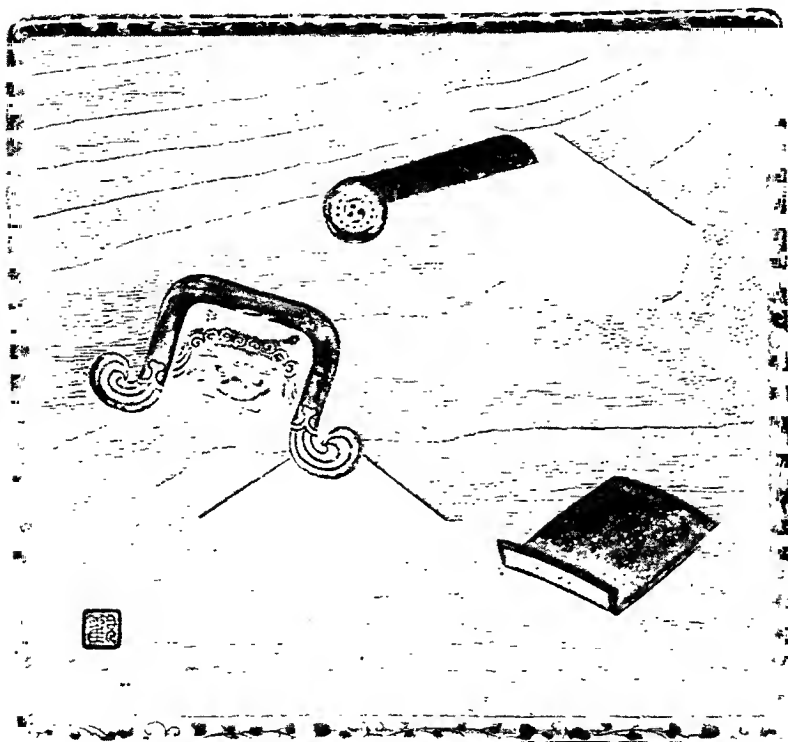
We now proceed to the consideration of work which leaves nothing to be desired, which in itself is the *ne plus ultra* of mechanical perfection, and against which the most hypercritical can only say that occasionally it exhibits traces of a

luxurious effeminacy when compared with the masculine productions of the artists we have hitherto discussed. For myself, fine examples of Yamamoto Shunshō have a fascination that attaches to the work of no other master. No one who has handled a piece can fail to recognise its perfection. The very silkiness of its surface is a marvel. It can well be imagined that work such as this is incapable of reproduction. It will not photograph



No. 167.—Interior of Tebako No. 166.

satisfactorily, its glossy surface giving off an infinity of reflections. Mechanical reproductions, save, perhaps, colotype, all fail, and the examples here illustrated, and in fact all the other lac objects, have been principally selected because they are less intractable than others.



No. 168.—Suzuribako. *Attributed to Ritsuo. Eighteenth Century.*

Shunshō is said to have died in 1682. Anderson mentions that he was alive in 1780, but this must have been a descendant. The tray (No. 169), one of a pair in my possession, has always been attributed to Shunshō. No. 170 is a beautiful example of the work of his pupil Nagahidé, in which the ground is black, the cranes are in silver lac,

and the reeds are drawn in gold with a powdering of gold—the whole is in *hira-makiyé* or flat work.

The best-known name in the annals of lac producers is that of Kajikawa, and the work of this family is much esteemed by the majority of collectors. The Gilbertson collection contained no less than a hundred *inrō* so signed,



No. 169.—Tray. By *Shunshō*.

and he considered that by their admirable taste and skill they and the Koma raised that article to the highest level of a work of Art. He was of opinion, too, that the first Kajikawa had never been excelled in the beauty and perfection of his black lac, or the richness of his *nashiji*, and that his gold often rivals Kōrin's. To this is added



sumptuous workmanship, a lavish display of gold, and a very full design. Amongst the most prominent Kajikawa were Hisataka, Hidetaka, and Takafusa.

There are many other lacquerers who have a place in the first rank, but of whom little can be said here; Yosei, Koami Nagataka who founded a school, Masazane, the three brothers Nagatoshi, Yoshihidé, and Nagata Yuji,



No. 170. — Box. By Nagahidé, Shunshō School. Eighteenth Century.

Hakusai, Inaba, Nagahide Mitsutoshi (a wonderful *inrō*-maker), and Hara Yoyusai, all at the latter part of the eighteenth century, and in the nineteenth, Harui, Hoitsu, Inagawa, Jokasai, Kakosai, Kanetomo, Kikugawa, Kiyokawa, Kuanshiosai, Kuanyosai, Seisei Korin, Ogawa Shomin, Senreisai, Shiomi Masanori, Shokasai, Shomosai, a celebrated maker of encrusted work, who encrusted *inrō* in conjunction with Shibayama (see *post*), Tosen, Toshirio,

Toyosai, Tsunéu, and Zéshin, a beautiful worker both as regards design and novelty of execution. He only died in 1891, aged eighty-four. The Gilbertson collection included work of two hundred and fifty masters, nearly all of whom were of the first order.



No. 171.—Suzuribako, School of Koma, decorated with Tea Ceremony Implements, etc.

Our illustration (No. 171) shows the extent to which decoration was carried in some work ; here the groundwork is aventurine. The design includes a pipe case (gold lac), tobacco-pouch (brown and gold lac), with silver fastener, similar in design to the dragon-head on the Ritsuō (No. 168),

and *inrô* (gold, with inlay of mother-of-pearl); the two beads on the string are in black and red lac, in high relief; the tea jar is of red and black lac, with ivory cover; its case is of gold lac; the jar behind has a lid of tortoiseshell; the *guri* lac box in the left lower corner is in red lac.

It may be well here to note some of the principal articles which were made of lacquer, and to what purpose they were put.

First of all we have the large suites of furniture, now seldom met with in a complete state in Europe, because whenever they come into the market they are split up by dealers. The late Duke of Edinburgh had a complete set, bearing the badge of Prince Toda. In this were included two *tansu* or stands on which the set of boxes, nine in number, and a tray, are placed. The boxes included large ones for holding papers, MSS., and books, *kobako*, or incense game box, and a *kodansu*, a small cabinet for holding the incense. There was also a *shodai* or sloping reading-desk, and a *suzuribako* or writing-case. The set illustrated in Nos. 91 and 92 are remarkable.

*Suzuribako* come over in some quantity to Europe (see Nos. 165 and 171), and are not always part of sets. The Fine Art Society's Exhibition included a considerable number, and in nothing was there a finer display of lac. Then we have the picnic boxes (*bentobako*, No. 100), mirror cases, fans, and lastly the oblong-shaped boxes, which, serving here the purpose of glove boxes, are supposed to have been utilised in like manner in their native land. Their use was as letter-carriers. A letter when written was folded and placed inside, and the box tied round by the writer with a silken cord; much stress was laid upon this cord (which is sometimes of very large dimensions and resplendent in colour), and upon the correct method of tying it. The box was then taken to its destination by a servant (who sometimes even had his mouth covered with a cloth so that he might not breathe upon it), and the letter was removed by the recipient. The answer was returned, either in the same box or one belonging to its writer. Upon

certain occasions the boxes were retained as a gift by the recipient, and this was usually the case when the despatch came from a nobleman. It is needless to add that few of the boxes found in our shops have ever served this purpose.

Lastly we have the *inrō*, which has been so frequently mentioned in this chapter. An *inrō* formed a necessary part of a gentleman's attire. It was attached by a silk cord to a *netsuké* and hung through the sash. It was used for medicines, which usually took the form either of pills or aromatic conserves, being made of such ingredients as myrrh, dragon's blood, musk, cinnamon, ginseng, and liquorice—compounds most of them imported, but of a harmless nature (Gowland, *Jap. Soc. Trans.*, vol. iii. pp. 2, 3). It also formed a seal box.<sup>1</sup> The last-named was its earliest use, and the word is derived from *in*=seal, *ro*=case. At first it was probably a box with divisions, for seal, ink pad etc., and was not worn but placed in the house, most usually on the *tokonoma* (p. 118), taking a place in the dress only in later times with more luxurious habits.

An *inrō* has usually four trays and a lid, each one fitting on to the other with mathematical precision, so much so that in a good specimen each piece is capable of transposition. *Inrō* are made of metal, wood, ivory, crystal, cherry bark, shell mosaic, and tortoiseshell, besides wood lacquered, the last-named being preferred for medicines, etc., as it keeps them in a moist condition. Artistic *inrō* were first introduced by Matahei in the seventeenth century.

For further information concerning *inrō* see a paper by Mr M. Tomkinson, *Jap. Soc. Trans.*, vol. iii. p. 22.

In conclusion, the following remarks by the late Mr

<sup>1</sup> Seals for a long period took the place of a signature. They were small blocks of wood, ivory, or metal on which was engraved the owner's seal. This was moistened on a vermilion pad and stamped in one or more places on the document. Pictures, and even books, received the seal of the author. Naturally this opened the door to forgery, and so educated persons placed their signature as well as their seal; the latter being also written. It was penal to forge this. The abandonment of seals is now general, so that another reason for the disuse of *inrō* is assured.

Gilbertson upon collecting lacquer may not be out of place. "If a collector is compelled, from want of space or for any similar reason, to confine himself to one particular class of Japanese Art work, he cannot do better than select *inrō* as the most desirable object. If the *netsuké* which were attached to them are added, there is no question as to what his choice should be.



No. 172.—*Inrō*. By *Hosetsu*.

As illustrations of the history, mythology, and folk-lore of the country they are hardly so rich as the metal-work, or the *netsuké*; but, as regards that extremely interesting branch of Japanese Art—the branch in which they stand and have always stood absolutely supreme—the art of working in lacquer, the *inrō* is of surpassing value. It is there one must look for the most perfect examples of lacquer work of every description. Not that larger works, such as writing boxes, perfume boxes, etc., do not afford equally fine examples of the work of the great artists—finer, indeed, from a pictorial point of view, because of the larger spaces available; but in the *inrō* one often finds a treatment of the subject and of the

material that would be inapplicable to the larger surface. The very limit of space and the form in the *inrō* often bring out the artistic knowledge of the designer—very frequently the executant at the same time—in a most remarkable manner. Wonderful harmony both of colour and composition are often combined with a minuteness of detail that makes one wonder what sort of eyes and hands the lacquerers possessed."

Every collector has his own views on the subject, and my readers will no doubt have gathered that there is a branch of Japanese Art which attracts me as much as lacquer. But there is no doubt there are few artistic pursuits which can be cultivated at so small a cost, and with so much probability of its being a good investment—a goal which the collector so frequently aspires to—as that which Mr Gilbertson has advocated. For a few pounds specimens can be obtained, the merit of which none can dispute, and which will be examples to all who see them of the pitch of perfection to which workmanship can attain; the test of familiarity and careful study will only enhance, as it shows, their value—and this is the crucial test to apply to all arts.

The newness of a piece of lacquer may often be certified by smelling the interior, if it be a box or suchlike. It takes many years for an object made of lac to lose a disagreeable oleaginous or cheesey smell if it is not exposed to the air. I have never been able to diagnose exactly the scent of old work, but there is a dryness about it which is unmistakable. It is always suspicious to find no appearance of wear on the bottom of an old box, especially at the corners. The difference in the appearance between good and bad gold can soon be distinguished; the former never, the latter soon tarnishing; it is almost needless to say, examine the workmanship.

The age of a piece, or rather the date beyond which it cannot be placed, may often be approximately ascertained by studying the design. For instance, many designs can be traced to Hokusai and so cannot be much more than a century old, and the great majority of the decorations seen upon lacquered objects are merely copied by the draughtsmen from pictures by noted painters. Honnami Kōyetsu and Koma Kiuhaku were the first to invent their own designs.

Collectors must not be disappointed if they meet with few signatures upon old lacquer. The ordinance never to buy without a signature does not apply here. Large pieces

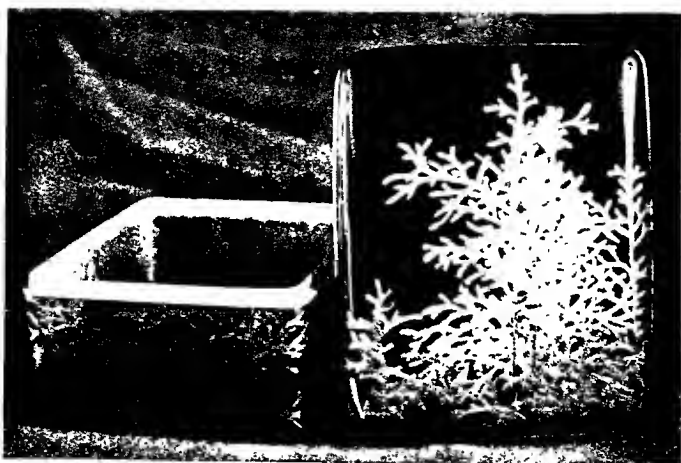
are seldom signed; when they are, that fact generally tends to raise suspicion. *Inrō* much more frequently bear the name of the maker. According to the *Kogei Shirō* signatures were first written on lacquer by Seki Sōchō in 1640. Until then they were always engraved. Signatures on *inrō* are made in a variety of ways; Kōrin's is sometimes modelled heavily in the body of the work, at others merely scratched with the point of a needle in the interior. Yosei's and Zeshin's signatures are always incised. The Kajikawa painted theirs in gold lac on the lower edge, adding a sort of urn-shaped seal. But, after all, signatures should not count for much. A few hours' careful study of good pieces, under an intelligent master, countervails all this, after which, as the saying is, *il ne faut pas être grand clerc en matière d'Art* to distinguish between fine and inferior work.

The lacquer industry in its finer forms has curiously enough failed either to keep pace or advance with its fellow arts during the Méiji era. Various reasons are given for this, and the true one is probably to be found amongst the following. First, whilst an enormous demand sprang up from all parts of the world, when Japanese trade got into its swing, for so-called lacquer objects of the cheapest and basest kinds, which could only be called by that name by courtesy, new lacquer of the finer kinds had no market. Collectors would not look at anything new, or pay the price necessitated by good workmanship, a price which, for a long time, was not less than that at which the old could be acquired. The industry, too, had no equivalent elsewhere, and therefore no competition to meet. A great deterrent was that the articles which were made served no useful purpose, being almost entirely reproductions of old style articles, and this objection still applies to most of the best pieces.

But in the Sections of Applied Art in the Schools, every effort is naturally being made to maintain and improve this national industry, and Lacquer Associations

amongst artisans and classes in the Industrial Schools throughout the country are doing their best to further its use.

Here in Great Britain, if collectors of the old pieces are few, it is hardly likely that others will be found to pay the sums which they were asked to pay at the exhibitions in Paris in 1900 or in London in 1910, and



No. 173.—Lacquer Box, with Makiyé of Asunaro leaves.  
*By Tsujimura Shokwa.*

which in instances went into hundreds of pounds for examples that had not stood the test of age.

The Court lacquerers at the present time are Kawanobé Itchō and Shirayama Shōsai, and fine pieces at the last-named exhibition appeared as the work of Kawasaki Kakutaro, Kato Kinjuro, Nakamura Sakujiro, Tsujimura Shokwa (No. 173), Sugibayashi Koko, and Mikami Jisaburo.





No. 174.—Tachi, Kozuka. *By Riushiken Kinchara Naosada of Kii.*

## CHAPTER V

### METAL-WORK

“As to all sorts of handicrafts, the jappanners want neither proper materials nor industry and application, and so far is it that they should have any occasion to send for masters abroad, they rather exceed all other nations in ingenuity and neatness of workmanship, particularly in brass, gold, silver and copper.”—*Kaempfer, seventeenth century.*

**K**AEMPFER when he wrote this well-deserved eulogy on the jappanners’ skill in metal-work had doubtless in his mind’s eye some of their great achievements, such as the colossal bronze Daibutsu of the Tōdaiji at Nara, which even in his day had an age of over a thousand years, and had no rival for size in the world as he knew it.

But as Japanese metal-work that calls for notice ranges from such masterpieces as this down to the pin that holds a sword blade in its place, it is clear that limits must be placed upon it in a hand-book, and therefore I have felt it imperative to confine my survey to such objects as it is possible may travel beyond the confines of the country.

Japanese metal-work as known outside Japan may be classified as follows:—

1. *Okimono*, or ornaments to be placed on a platform: consisting either of articles used for sacred purposes—such as statuettes of deities and supernatural animals (dragons *shishi*, etc.), candlesticks, incense-burners (*koirō*), flower-vases, gongs, and bells—or for household adornment, such as flower-vases (*hanaike*), bowls to hold miniature gardens, incense-burners, and figures of animals (ordinarily used

in the last-named capacity), such as deer, tortoises, toads, fish, crabs, etc.

2. Articles for household use, such as fire-holders (*hibachi*), mirrors (*kagami*), saké kettles (*chōshi*), and writing-cases (*susuribako*).

3. Armour, including spears, bows, arrows, swords, and masks.

4. Articles for personal use, pipes (*kiseru*), pouch ornaments, beads (*ojime*), buttons to hold pouches in the sash, brush cases, inkstands (*yatate*), etc.

5. Vases and other objects made for export.

6. Cloisonné.

As regards 1. The sacred treasures ("hōmotsu," or "precious things") consist of the adornments of the altar, or gifts bestowed in olden times by nobles in return for the guardianship of their family tombs, or objects acquired by the priests for the ornamentation of their shrines. Although considerable dispersals of temple treasures surreptitiously took place in the early days of the Méiji era, so much so that the Government not only prohibited their sale, but catalogued them, not many of those made of metal have been exported, probably owing to their considerable bulk and weight; those that have, consist for the most part of incense-burners, candlesticks, and flower-holders.

Household ornaments are always few in number. The temples in Japan number seventy thousand, but the houses of persons sufficiently well-to-do to possess ornaments of artistic merit or value have always been much less numerous. It must be remembered that the dwelling even of the keenest collector would not be cumbered like ours with works of Art here, there, and everywhere, but, on the contrary, would be noticeable for the simplicity and fewness of the objects displayed. There might be a store in the godown or safe, but these would never be shown simultaneously. An incense-burner and a flower-holder would probably represent the whole of the metal ornaments seen in the living-room of a gentleman's house.

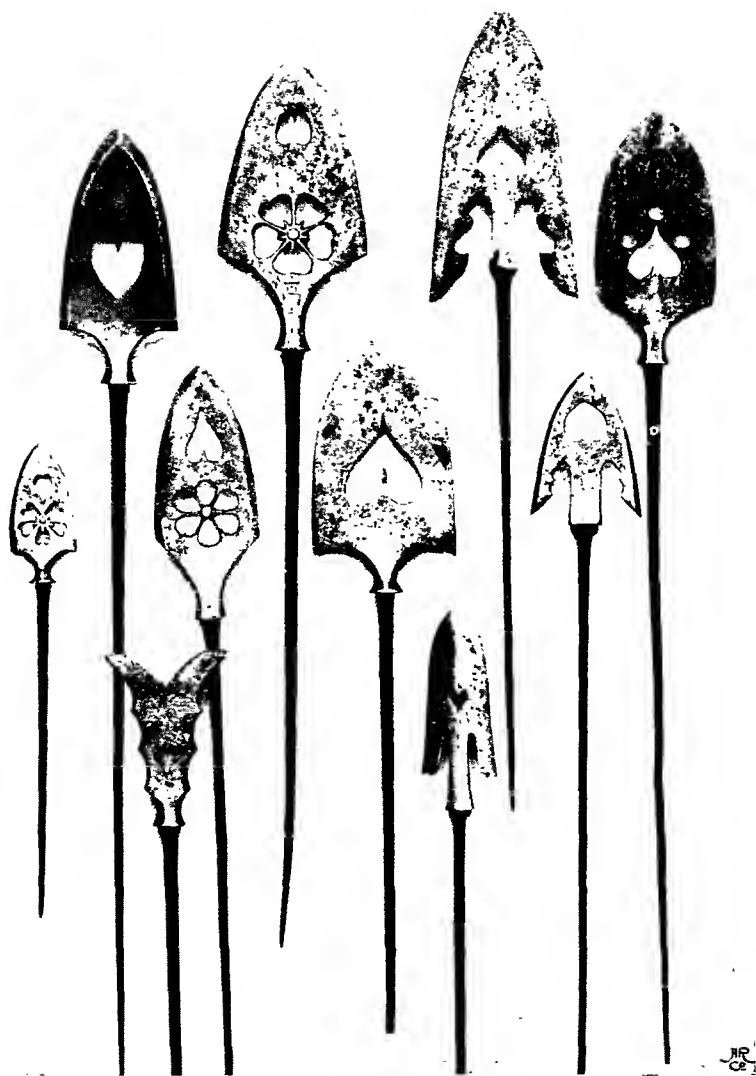
Metal *okimono*, properly so called, of any age, are not, to my mind, calculated to arouse much interest outside their own country, for these reasons—they are by no means always of elegant shape; when they represent animal forms they seldom are notable for fine modelling; the work of a few men, such as Seimin or Toūn, excepted, their principal merit lies in the excellence of the patina which they assume; but even this bears no comparison either in quality or variety with that which we find on the smaller articles, to which attention will presently be directed. There are, of course, exceptions, but a glance at the majority of the specimens contained in our museums and elsewhere will show that their value is more archæological than artistic.

Of notable casters in bronze, it will serve our purpose if we go back to Seimin, the first artist whose works are likely to be met with by my readers. He was born in 1769, but it was in the early nineteenth century that he and his pupils Toūn, Teijō, Sōmin, Masatsuné, and Keisai attained to distinction for their productions, which were marked by every characteristic necessary to fine work—quality in the metal employed, clean casting, and dexterous finish. Seimin's tortoises have a world-wide repute, as have Toūn's dragons (see *Jap. Soc. Trans.*, vol. vi. 98). Sōmin worked until 1871. Brinkley mentions the following names of expert nineteenth-century bronzists: Zenrinsai Gido, Takusai, and Hotokusai. Those of the Méiji era will be noted later.

2. These have already been discussed in Chapter VIII.

3. The armour in which the Japanese arrayed himself was of the most formidable and extensive character, as may be seen from the illustrations on pp. 90 and 101, and makers became as skilled and noted in that as in other branches of work; but really fine specimens are seldom seen here, those displayed being usually the accoutrements of the rank and file.<sup>1</sup> Spears and bows are not subjects

<sup>1</sup> For Japanese armour see Catalogue to the Exhibition of Japanese Arms and Armour, Jap. Soc., 1905.



No. 175.—Arrow Heads. (*Author's Collection.*)

to interest many persons, and masks have been treated of (p. 240), but as will be seen from the illustration (No. 175)



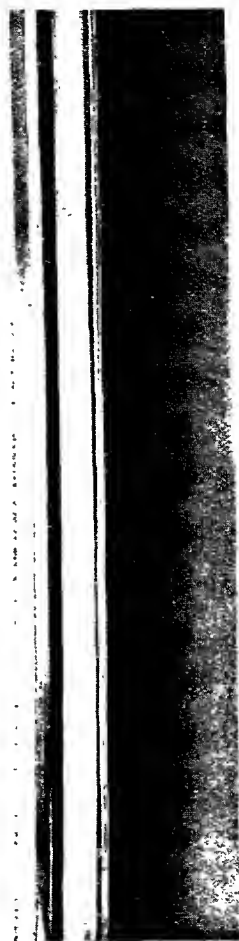
No. 176. — Muramasa Blade. (Gilbertson Collection.)

arrow heads are often very refined and artistic in character, and are made of splendid material. (See *Jap. Soc. Trans.*, vol. iv. p. 112.) There only remains, therefore, in this section the sword, upon which, however, a volume might be written without exhausting what is of interest concerning it.

It can readily be imagined that in a country where internal wars were constant, where private quarrels grew into family feuds, where the vendetta was unhindered by law and applauded by society, where the slightest breach of etiquette could only be repaired by the death of one of the parties, and where a stain of any sort upon character necessitated suicide by a sword thrust, attention was very early directed towards obtaining perfection in the only article of defence or offence which a Japanese carried. Nor would it long remain unornamented in a community where artistic instincts were universal, and jewellery and other ornaments were not worn. Consequently we find attention first of all directed towards the perfection of the blade, until as regards forging, tempering, sharpness, cutting edge, and cunning distribution of weight it had no rivals in the world. It was carried to perfection as early as the tenth century, and many a

one attained notoriety not only for performing miraculous feats, but becoming imbued with such a thirst for blood that its owner was interdicted from wearing it. Sword-making even became an imperial occupation. The most famous blade-makers were Amakuni, Amaga, Shinsoku, Yasutsune, Sanemori, Munechika, Mitsuyo, Yukishige, Joshin, Yukihira, Nori-muné, Kunitomo, Hisakuni, Kunitsuna, Yoshimune, Yoshihiro, and Masamuné. Probably none of their blades have ever come to this country, for masterpieces are priceless, and even genuine ones of lesser artists have been known to fetch 5,000 gold yen; but we give engravings of two, No. 176, alleged to be by Muramasa, and which was in the late Mr Gilbertson's collection, and No. 177 belonging to Mr Harding Smith, and which has certificates by the first experts to show that it is by Akihiro of Choshu; it is dated 1369. I say in one case alleged, for in nothing was forgery so practised. Lists in the seventeenth century of experts included over three thousand names of forgers whose productions could hardly be distinguished from the originals.

The blades are made of soft, elastic iron, combined with hard steel. The tempering is done in a charcoal



No. 177.—Portion of Blade. *By Akihiro of Choshu.* (*Harding Smith Collection.*)

furnace, the back and part of the sides being enclosed in fireclay; about a quarter of an inch remained uncovered, and the various makers made a pattern of this edge, imitating one thing and another (as for instance Mount Fuji), by which a connoisseur would at once recognise the maker. All good blades have these markings, those on Mr Harding Smith's blade having been described by a French connoisseur as "*un paysage en acier*." Many have engraved upon them characters in a conventional Sanscrit (Bonji), usually invocations to Fudo or some other divinity, and we often find Fudo's sword with the *Vajra* handle, sometimes with the dragon coiled round it. Not every one dare use blades so figured as they seemed unfitted to bloodshed, and so it is said that these were the swords of persons who had adopted a religious life.

The different processes of forging were accompanied by ceremonial and prayers: for instance, before sitting down to the final tempering, the workman donned a black cap with white strings and a white robe. The swordsmith<sup>1</sup> was a far greater person than any other worker with his hands. To the successful maker's name were added one of the honorary suffixes *suké* or *kami*, which were official titles. *Hogen*, when applied, meant "expert" (not baronet, as has been alleged).

But the artist never by the receipt of these titles ceased to be an artisan, or obtained social or official recognition, save in the form of a pension. The owner in olden times had responsibilities. A good sword would not remain long with an evil-doing owner, and the quality of the blade reflected his character, and was a second conscience to him which he had to live up to. When a sword was presented for inspection a folded paper must be held on the lips, and the sword be held above the level of the mouth so that no impure breath should soil it, and the sharp edge must never be turned towards the host. The rôle of Master Swordsmith has practically passed away. The last

<sup>1</sup> The sharpener was also a man of renown.

were Minamoto Kanenori who, if still alive, must be eighty-one years of age, and Gwassan Sadamuné of Ōsaka who is only three years his junior. For years the latter, although perhaps the finer artist of the two, had to engrave blades in imitation of the old masters. The fact is that the supply of old swords is still enormous, as for hundreds of years the rich Daimyō accumulated them, and now that they are no longer worn by civilians even the demand for blades for officers in the army and navy does not exhaust them. Our illustration, No. 178, taken from the *Illustrated London News* of 1864, shows the transition period when the rank and file carried a sword as well as a musket.

The furniture of the sword and its ornamentation is a study of the most varied kind, and one which, if taken up, is certain to be of ever-increasing interest. There are still but few here who occupy themselves with it, and therefore I propose to state shortly why I consider that it should enlist the sympathies of a larger class.

Personal ornaments illustrate better than anything else the individuality of their wearer, and collectively the taste of the nation. Especially is this the case where the article in question is worn as a privilege, is held in respect, is handed down as an heirloom, and is the subject of the most carefully prescribed etiquette.

Not only the manufacture but the adornment of the sword was for centuries a profession reserved to artists of the highest attainments. The ornament lavished upon it illustrated religious and civil life, history, heroism, folk-lore, manners and customs, and the physical aspect and natural history of the country. These have been executed in every variety of metal, so that a further interest attaches on this account. The subjects are so varied that two are seldom alike, unless made for a pair of swords. This variety often lets new light into a legend, from the artists' different interpretations of it. Careful selection and systematic arrangement increase both interest and value. They are portable in size; like all the best work of the nation they

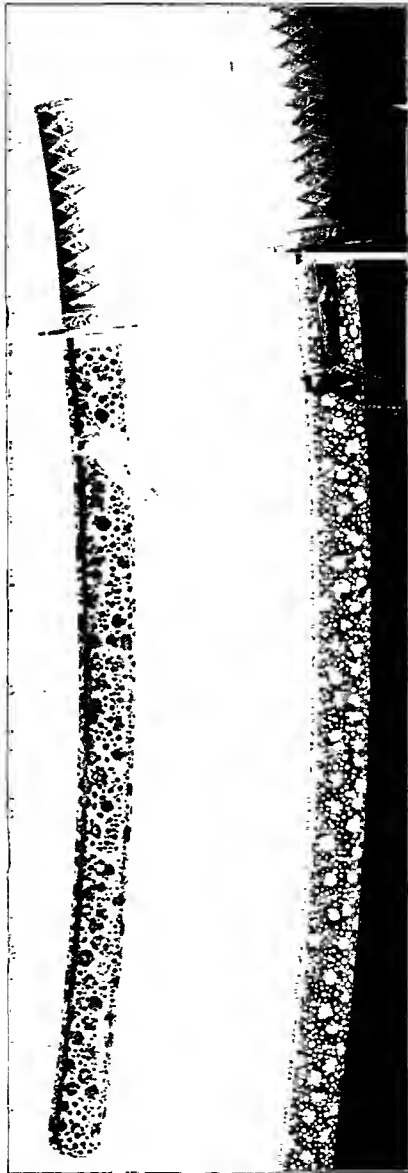




No. 178.—Japanese Soldiers at Dhill, 1864.

are diminutive, and five hundred of them can go into a coin cabinet. They are curiously enough as reasonable in price as they were twenty years ago. A pound will purchase a piece of workmanship which European jewellers admit they could not readily imitate. Western swords and daggers with no greater artistic wealth than these possess fetch hundreds of pounds. The time may be long before Japanese arms realise such prices, but now that their use is abolished and their makers have ceased to be, they must have an increasing value.

Lesser advantages are that they are not breakable, and that they improve invariably in appearance when they reach home and have been subjected to careful cleaning.



No. 179.---A Pair of Swords.

To these reasons may be added that the curiosity-hunter is just now in straits for want of a new hunting-ground. With every civilised nation on the alert, it is not surprising that the ground is getting cleared, that hunting the old game is far too expensive, and that he who would spring fresh must go far afield.

The wearing of the sword, the precious possession of lord and vassal "the soul of the *Samurai*," was, as I have stated, a privilege which only those of a certain rank were entitled to. A *Samurai* or soldier might wear two, but a farmer or working man could only carry one, and then only by special permission. In the time of the Ashikaga (sixteenth century), the fashion of wearing two swords (*daishō*), one (*katana*) about 3 feet in length for offence and defence, and another (*chisakatana* or *wakizashi*), from 10 or 12 to about 23 inches came into vogue. There were also the *ken*, straight and usually two-edged; the *tachi* or slung-sword (No. 174); the *tanto* or short sword; the sacred *hoken*, leaf-shaped; the *aikuchi*, or dirk without a guard, worn by doctors and inferior officials; the *jintachi*, or two-handed war-sword; and the *mamori* or stiletto. In full dress the colour of the scabbard was black with a tinge of green and red, and it varied as occasion required, thus giving employment to the lacquerers, who



No. 180.—Ivory Kozuka; Blade by Umétada Nishijin.

exercised great ingenuity in their designs. In the pair (No. 179), the scabbards are of so-called shark-skin (*samé*), but really the skin of a species of ray, the *Rhinobatus armatus*, filled in with black lac. Tiger-skin and other furs were also used as coverings for scabbards. The taste of the wearer was also displayed in the colours, size, and method of wearing his weapon. "Daimyō often spent extravagant sums upon a single sword and small fortunes upon a collection. A *Samurai*, however poor, would have a blade of sure temper and rich mountings, deeming it honourable to suffer for food that he might have a worthy emblem of his rank."

Upon a child being presented at his birth at the temple of his father's particular deity he received, if a boy, two fans amongst other gifts.<sup>1</sup> These were harbingers of the swords he would ultimately wear. At the age of three a sword belt was girded round his waist; at seven, if a *Samurai*, he wore two swords suited to his size and indicative of his rank; at fifteen these were exchanged for the swords he carried throughout life and handed down unsullied to his heir.<sup>2</sup> The

<sup>1</sup> A girl receives a cake of pomade, which should bring good looks; both receive flax thread in hope of longevity

<sup>2</sup> New Year's Day is the birthday of every Japanese; no matter upon what day they are born, they are considered to be one year old on the ensuing New Year's Day.



No. 181.—Kogai.

coloured Plate, No. II., shows a young *Samurai* with his swords.

The wearing of swords was abolished on the 1st January 1877, and the "people obeyed the edict without a blow being struck, and the curio shops at once displayed heaps of swords which, a few months before, the owners would less willingly have parted with than with life itself."<sup>1</sup>

The other important pieces of a sword, besides the blade and scabbard, which we will term its furniture, are :—

The *tsuba* or guard, usually a flat piece of metal, circular or oval in form, which is perforated by a triangular aperture for the transmission of the blade. At either side are one or more openings for the lodgment of the tops of two accessory implements called the *kozuka* and *kogai*. These openings are often found closed with metal, indicating that the guard has been adapted to a different sword to that for which it was made.

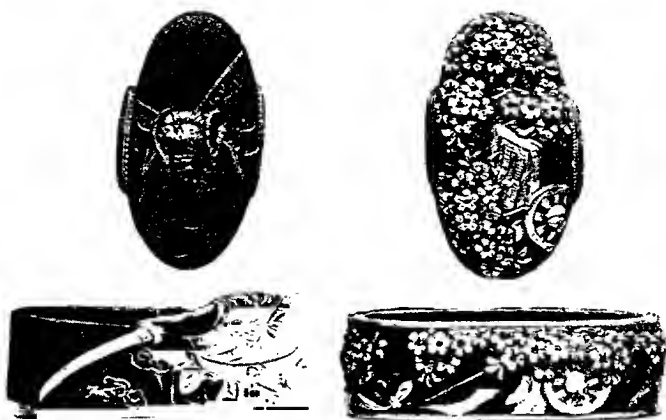
The *kozuka* (No. 174) is the handle of a short dagger (*kokatana*) which fits into one side of the scabbard of the *wakisashi* or dagger. The *kozuka* and blade in No. 180. do not belong to one another. The former is of ivory, with the grasshopper in mother-of-pearl and tortoiseshell; the blade is one by Umétada Nishijin of Jōshu, and bears his signature in inlaid gold: it was made in the seventeenth century. The *kogai* (No. 181) is a skewer inserted on the other side of the scabbard, and which, it is said, was left by its possessor in the body of an adversary killed in battle, as a card of ownership. *Kogai* are seldom found in swords; they are usually made of a malleable material, and ornamented similarly to the *kozuka*.

The *menuki* are small ornaments placed on either side of the hilt to give a better grasp to it. They are also used to ornament the scabbard, especially on the *wakisashi* and on daggers. Imitations of *menuki* find a place in curio shops, but they can usually be detected by their being either cast or rolled out of common metal. No one should

<sup>1</sup> Chamberlain's "Things Japanese," p. 239.

buy these or similar things without first examining with a glass some really good ones. There is generally a signature to be found on old specimens.

The *kashira* is the pommel or cap of metal which fits on to the head of the handle, being secured to its place by a cord passed through two lateral eyes. The *fuchi* is an oval ring of metal which encircles the base of the handle, and through its centre the blade passes. The *fuchi* and *kashira* were made by the same artist, who usually signed his name in the underside of the former. The first of the illustrations of them (No. 182) shows the story of Watanabé



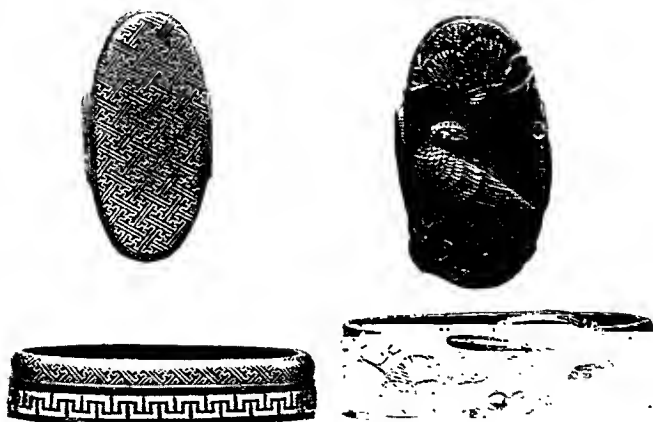
Nos. 182 and 183.—Fuchi-kashira. (*Author's Collection.*)

killing the Demon Spider, which is on both parts. The bases of this pair are iron, the spider is in copper, Watanabé is in shakudo, etc., with gold inlay and silver sword. The second pair (No. 183) illustrates the Mikado's carriage covered with cherry blossom on the occasion of a fête; here each flower is cut from solid silver, the carriage is in gold, the base iron. The design on the third pair (No. 184) is in gold wire inlaid in copper. In the fourth the birds, branches, etc., are carved in relief out of iron. Now these marvels of workmanship, for they are nothing else, are only samples out of hundreds, each of which may be

relied upon to furnish the same variety and excellence. Why then do they fail to attract the attention of collectors?<sup>1</sup>

The *kurikata* is a cleat through which the *sageo* (or cord for holding back the sleeves whilst fighting) passed, and the *kojiri* is the metal end to the scabbard.

No idea of the artistic value of sword furniture can be gained from the swords which one still meets with in shops. This rubbish, for it is nothing else, consists of the weapons which were discarded by the rank and file upon the adoption of European uniforms, and a hunt through hundreds of them will hardly repay the trouble



Nos. 184 and 185.—Fuchi-kashira.

incurred, although their blades are usually of fine steel and make splendid but dangerous tools for garden use. It goes without saying that these cast-offs have been carefully scrutinised before they left their native land. For some reason, which I have not been able to ascertain, almost all the best guards and other appurtenances of the sword come over here in a detached state; very few fine swords make their appearance, but a quantity of most elab-

<sup>1</sup> A word of caution. Dealers usually try to make one buy these and similar things in lots. Don't. Rather pay a higher price for selection.

orately ornamented specimens which have in the majority of instances been made for the outside market. It is curious that the decoration on many of these is taken from marine subjects; for instance, a lobster in metal will form the *kojiri*, the lacquer sheath will have lumps of coral let into it, and other metal ornaments will have representations of coral-divers, fish, or seaweed.

Foreigners have much difficulty in obtaining information about Japanese metal-workers of the past. The *Sōken Kishō*, published in 1781, gives biographies of the most noted, and Captain Brinkley has had it translated, but he considers it of little value.<sup>1</sup> Fortunately in metal, even more readily than in lac, a good eye and a certain amount of experience will enable a distinction to be made as to what should be acquired and what shunned.

The earliest period in connection with artistic work which will interest the general reader is that known as the Ashikaga, a time that covered the products of the first of the Gotō, Miochin, and Umétada families. At its commencement, 1390, there lived at Hagi Nagato Nakai Mitsutsuné, the earliest name to be met with on sword-guards. Later Kanéiyé of Fushimi in Yamashiro, Umétada Shigéyoshi (the renowned swordsmith), Gotō Yūjō (died 1504),<sup>2</sup> Shigétaka, Miochin Nobuiyé (1507-1555), Iranken Yamakichi (1570), and Hoan, were all renowned for their *tsuba*.

It is possible for collectors here to obtain specimens of the *tsuba* of Kanéiyé and his immediate follower Nobuiyé, although doubtless some, perhaps the majority, are but copies (early or late) of the originals, but still they have interest as illustrations of the styles affected by these primitive masters. His *tsuba* are distinguished for their iron being thin and soft with a reddish, heavy patina, and both he and his immediate

<sup>1</sup> The "Hawkshaw Catalogue" and "Japanese Sword Furniture," a catalogue of the Naunton collection, by Mr H. L. Joly, are useful works: the same author is about to publish the "Sword Book of Arai Hakuseki." The grouping of metal-workers on p. 295 is from his pen.

<sup>2</sup> Styled in the "Histoire de l'Art du Japon" Gōtau-y-ou-dyau.



followers for a time left the marks of the hammering upon their work.



No. 186. Dragon. *Iry Miochin.*

So also of the work of the Miochin, although in this instance the family dates back in continuous record to the twelfth century, the examples may be of comparatively modern date, say the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. They excelled as armourers, but they exercised their skill in other ways, as for instance in the Eagle in the Victoria and Albert Museum, and in the Dragon (No. 186). Interesting examples of their skill may be encountered in helmets, which are monuments of dexterous manipulation in iron, and can be picked up at prices which are moderate consider-

ing the labour and skill bestowed upon them.

In the fifteenth century appeared the Gotō family, whose work is held in the highest estimation in Japan; it has too much sameness and academic style to please those who enjoy the work of artists who deal with the subject with freer and larger aims, but it exhibits finer workmanship than any other school. It is known as *iyēbori* (style of the family). The founder of the house, Gotō Yūjō, lived in Mino in the fifteenth century (1426-1504). His descendants were allowed to add the "jō" to their names, and were official chasers, not only to the Ashikaga, but after their fall to Hidéyoshi, Iyéyasu, and the Tokugawa. Consequently it always produced works of the highest quality, and retained its traditional renown, its successors being selected, not in direct descent, but from those who showed the greatest talent. At the commencement of the seventeenth century the house of Gotō moved with the Shōgun Iyéyasu to Yédo, where their descendants worked until the Revolution, but a branch remained at Kyōto, and were consequently known as the Kio-Gotōs.<sup>1</sup> The Gotōs were especially noted for their work in *nanakoji*, so called from its resemblance to fish roe, produced by punching the surface into a texture of small dots. It requires some experience to distinguish between fine and inferior work in *nanakoji*; a magnifying glass will, however, show the perfect regularity and shape of the dots in good work. During the lifetime of the earlier members of the family, *tsuba* were usually of hard-tempered iron, and consequently not suitable to their delicate work. We find some of the best examples of the Gotōs upon *kozuka* and *fuchi-kashira*, but in these latter instances it is not earlier than the seventeenth century. One of the requisites in a Japanese connoisseur's education is to recognise the *iyēbori* (personal style) of the first thirteen generations of Gotōs.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> From the time of Gotō Tsujo (XI.) (1685-1721) the art became infected by the style of the school of Yokoya Sōmin and rapidly declined.

<sup>2</sup> A paper on the Gotō by Herr A. G. Moslé is in the *Jap. Soc. Trans.*, vol. viii. 188.

With the sixteenth century piercing and chasing, and in rare instances inlaying and damascening, came into vogue with *tsuba*-makers. A great name in connection with this change was Umétada. The work still continued as a rule to be marked by an absence of extraneous ornament in the shape of gold, silver, or alloys, but was ornamented in the case of Umétada by a free use of the graver. Umétada Shigéyoshi has been called "the master of masters"; but his name has been used by a number of men of later date and inferior calibre. The blade to the *kozuka* (No. 180) is signed in inlaid gold by Umétada.

With the close of the sixteenth century the period of constant wars drew to a end, and resulted in an era of peace that lasted for 250 years; the sword-guard, which in former times was of no service unless it was tough enough to withstand the full force of a blow dealt with a two-handed sword, was now adapted for Court use and the adornment of the person. Consequently from this time onwards an increasing change in the character of the metal used and the ornamentation employed is seen, and we find in the ateliers at Ōsaka damascenings of gold and silver in the iron, the son of Kanéiyé encrusting his work with copper, and translucent enamels being introduced by Hirata Dōnin. Kinai of Echizen, whose elegant pierced *tsuba* elicit admiration, was also working (No. 187), his style being followed by numbers of followers.

The close of the seventeenth century was notable for the rise of the three schools of Nara, Yokoya, and Omori, all offshoots from the Gotō. The Nara School took its name from Nara Toshitēru (1624), and attracted to itself upon its foundation a number of artists whose works have ever since been sought for by connoisseurs—namely, Nara Toshinaga (1667-1736), Tsuchiya Yasuchika (1670-1744), Hamano Shōzui (1697-1769), and Joi (1700-1761). Of these Shōzui appears to have had the largest number of followers, amongst them being Chokuzui, Kunichika, Juzui, Hozui, and Kuzui, and Hamano Kozui who surpassed his master

Shōzui in delicacy of workmanship. The school was a revolutionary one, and started, as did those of Yokoya and Hamano, as protests against the academic style of the Gotō.

The School of Yokoya—named after its protagonist Sōmin (1670-1733), whose family name was Yokoya—arose about the same time. The real founder appears to have been Sōyo (1644), and Sōmin's successors were Yanagawa

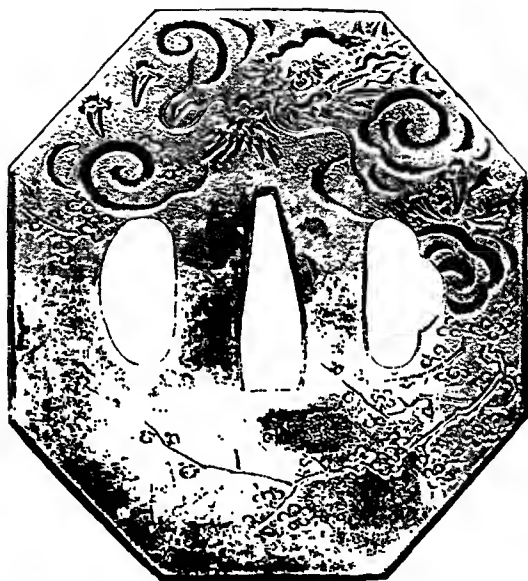


No. 187.—Tsuba. By *Kimari*.

Naomasa, Suzuki Térukiyo, and Omori Terumasa (1705-1772), who joined hands with the Omori school, which included his nephew Teruhidé (1730-1798). The style developed in the hands of his follower Konkwan (1743-1800).

The Omori School was founded by Shigémitsu (1693-1725), with whom Teruhidé, known for his modelling of waves and imitation of aventurine, may be classed. At

Hikoné Soten, with his pierced and damascened *tsuba* with subjects of battle scenes, much imitated by inartistic followers, worked. Besides this may be mentioned the schools of Ishiguro (Yédo), with Masatsuné (1760-1828), Masayoshi Hata Nobuyoshi, and Hosono, of the early part of the last century, whose flat, incised work is remarkable for the introduction of coloured surfaces. All the foremost artists in these schools displayed originality, work-



No. 188.—Tsuba, Silvered Copper. By Kiriussai Sōmin.

ing in varied styles, most of them showing traces of Gotō influence.

The last artist of distinction, Kano Natsuo, attained to great celebrity. His shakudo has never been surpassed. He was entrusted shortly before his death with the mounting of a blade by Bizen Sanemori for the emperor, at a cost of 1,700 yen.

Metal-workers like their fellows in other branches differed in style according to the locality in which they

worked—and traditions and surroundings influenced those at the old capital and the new in like manner as the tongue they spoke and wrote.

Hence we find the following distinct groups of artists and differences of work :—

(*a*) Armourers, eleventh to nineteenth century, with zenith in the sixteenth to seventeenth, with Nobuiyé, and the Miochin.

(*b*) Tsuba-makers in iron: Kanéiyé, Hoan, Yamakichi.

(*c*) The decorative schools of inlay: Fushimi, Yoshiro, Kaga, sixteenth century onwards.

(*d*) The Shoami all over the country, descended from the Kyōto group.

(*e*) The Umétada, sixteenth to seventeenth century onwards.

(*f*) The Gotō.

(*g*) The schools derived from the Gotō.

(*h*) The ateliers of Echizen, Awa, Sado, Unyo Chōshu, Higo, Satsuma and other provinces.

(*i*) The iron-workers of Yédo.

(*j*) The Nara School and its followers, including the Mito workers, with Tetsugendo, Hitotsuyanagi, Tsujin, the Tamagawa, etc., etc. (eighteenth century).

(*k*) Independent workers: the Otsuki in Kyōto and the Tanaka group in Yédo, just before 1850-1860.

The decoration of the sword furniture showed symptoms of decline early in the last century. Working in hard wrought iron was first of all shirked, and similar effects were endeavoured to be produced by castings; then the decoration ran riot and transgressed all limits, so that many of the pieces made between 1840-1870 could never have been used for the purposes for which they were professedly intended. Such products are remarkable in a way, as showing the lengths to which elaboration may be carried, but they can never stand for a day beside the dignified workmanship of an earlier date.

Imitations of sword-guards are imported. These are

castings from old specimens, and can usually be detected by holding them at the point of one's finger and hitting them sharply with another piece of metal, when they will emit a dull sound only, whereas a fine old guard will ring like the best bell-metal. It is well to test all guards in this way, although it must be recollected that guards with much piercing will not ring, and that many of those made in the nineteenth century are of such malleable iron as not to stand the test.

It is a question whether some of the old guards may not also be castings, even some which are chased. The difference between wrought and cast iron is that the latter contains from  $1\frac{1}{2}$  to 4 per cent. of carbon, the former hardly any; but it is possible to toughen cast iron by annealing, that is, by a surface removal of carbon. Many guards are covered with magnetic oxide of iron, to which they owe much of their beauty.

As I have already mentioned, one of the principal factors which should give to Japanese metal-work an interest is the variety of material, and the remarkable way in which it is treated, a factor which is overlooked by many who only glance at the subject. Professor Brinckmann, who was one of the earliest directors of museums to see the advantage of recognising Japanese Art, acquired, at a small cost, in Hamburg, a most complete collection of sword-guards, and these he arranged according to subject, metal, and design. He considered that they are of more use if they illustrate, as they do, the manner and customs of the country, the various metals employed, and the versatility of design, than if they were classified according to the men who made them. The advantages to the trade of Hamburg through this Japanese section have been remarkable. A new and prosperous industry sprang up which was directly traceable to it, and a Hamburg firm carried off a contract for the furnishing of the Emperor of Japan's palace against all Europe, owing to their having the means at hand of ascertaining what that potentate's requirements would be.

The value of Japanese alloys to our manufacturers was shown long ago in a paper by Professor Roberts-Austen, and from it I take the following particulars respecting *shakudo* and *shibuichi*, the principal alloys used. Analyses show that the former usually consists of 95 per cent. of copper,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  to 4 of gold, 1 to  $2\frac{1}{2}$  of silver, and traces of lead, iron, and arsenic. The latter contains from 50 to 67 per cent. of copper, from 30 to 50 of silver, with traces of gold and iron.<sup>1</sup> The precious metals are sacrificed in order to produce certain results; in the case of *shakudo*, the gold enabling the metal to receive a rich purple coat, or *patina*, as it is called, when subjected to certain pickling solutions; in that of *shibuichi*, the alloy forcing the metal to assume a beautiful silver-grey tint under the same process. It is one or other of these influences which gives the patina to all Japanese metals, and it is understood by their craftsmen in a way which no other has yet arrived at. A worn-out patina will often re-assert itself by the aid of much handling, the moisture of the skin being all that is required. This shows the acuteness of the producer in forming his alloy so that the formation of the patina should be assisted by a treatment which an article in everyday use is sure to obtain.

The three commonest pickles are said by Professor Roberts-Austen to be made up as follows, and are used boiling:—

	No. 1.	No. 2.	No. 3.
Verdigris - - -	438 gr.	87 gr.	220 gr.
Sulphate of copper - -	392 „	437 „	540 „
Nitre - - -	...	87 „	...
Common salt - - -	...	146 „	...
Sulphur - - -	...	233 „	...
Water - - -	1 gal.	...	1 gal.
Vinegar - - -	...	1 gal.	5 fl. dr.

<sup>1</sup> The derivation of the name *shibuichi* is “one-fourth,” which is clearly incorrect.



As a perfect patina is one of the essential qualities of the article, care must be taken that it does not lose it. Collectors will do well to remember this when cleaning their metal-work; I thought to improve some of my earliest acquisitions by rubbing them with a certain German paste; the result was disastrous, as it removed the patina instantly. In another case a collection of pouch ornaments was spoilt in an hour by ignorantly polishing with plate powder. The metal in all fine Japanese work is so good that it seldom requires more than a chamois leather to bring out all its qualities, and even this it is not advisable to use very often.<sup>1</sup>

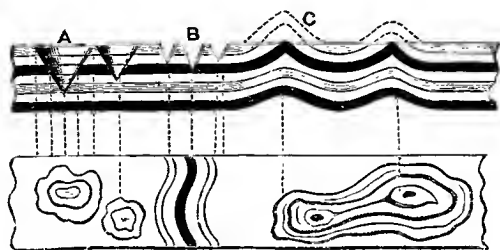
An alloy<sup>2</sup> which gives a yellow bronze appearance of a soft and luminous hue is called *sentoku*, from the Chinese period (1426-1435) in which it is understood that this amalgam was discovered. It is made by the addition of zinc which produces, under continuous heatings and sprinklings with sulphate of copper and nitric acid, an appearance of speckled gold. The Japanese also term copper which has turned green *sei do*, and yellow bronze with iron and a trace of tin *sentōk kōdo*. Japanese bronze (*karakane*) is a mixture in which copper is found in from 72 to 88 parts, lead from 4 to 20, and tin from 2 to 8.

There is another very interesting material to be met with, namely, *mokumé* or wood-grain. The diagram, No. 189, shows the method of its manufacture. Thin sheets of alloys are soldered together, care being taken that the metals which present diversity of colour come together. Conical holes (A) of varying depth are then drilled in the mass or trench-like cuts made (B). The mass is then hammered

<sup>1</sup> Upon bringing purchases of metal-work home it is best to scrub them with a soft nail-brush in warm water and soap; thoroughly rinse afterwards in clean water, dry before fire and rub with leather. Where rust has taken hold the following course is adopted by Professor Church: Boil or soak in strong solution of caustic potash; thoroughly wash, and remove rust by brushing in water; when dry rub with linseed oil after three days wipe off oil and scrub with hard brush. N.B.—This does not apply to inlaid or patined guards.

<sup>2</sup> Copper 72.32, tin 8.126, lead 6.217, zinc 13.102, nickel .065.

until the holes disappear, and are replaced by banded circles or lines; similar effects may be produced by making depressions in the back with blunted tools, so as to produce prominences 'C', which are then filed down, and produce complicated sections, as shown in the lower part of the diagram. The colours of the alloys are of course developed by pickling. There is yet another variation of this where the sheets of alloy are merely welded together and then cut through, so as to imitate guri-lac, which it does most effectually. Mokumé, like everything else, is imitated in Japan, but in a remarkably clever way, the various colours being japanned on to the surface; it can be detected by scraping the edge where the strata of the metals should



No. 189.—Method of Manufacture of Mokumé.

be visible. The imitation must be almost as troublesome to produce as the original, and it is possible, therefore, that it may not be made with intent to defraud.

Professor Roberts-Austen succeeded in reproducing *mokumé* and every Japanese patina which he met with excepting that known as "lobster"-red. He was of opinion that many of the happiest effects in Japanese work have been the result of chance, an artificer having become possessed of a mass of copper which, owing to the presence of certain impurities (of the nature of which he was unaware), took a wonderful patina. His use of any individual metal was never anything else than a sparing one, and therefore it can easily be understood that if this mass was, fortunately for him, of some size, it might almost

last him a lifetime. Since he mentioned this to me I have seen the probability of it demonstrated in various ways. For instance, in No. 190, the pan of the *hibachi* carried by the servant is a wonderful piece of lobster-red, but it is not more than an eighth of an inch square. In the companion piece, which represents a gentleman and his servant, the lobster-red is used to a still smaller extent, namely, on the sword-hilt. This brings me to another trait in Japanese metal-work, and one which our manufacturers should imitate, namely, its "extreme simplicity." The brilliant metals, gold and silver, are used most sparingly, only for enrichment, and to heighten the general effect; the precious metals are only employed where their presence will serve some definite end in relation to the design as a whole. What would one of their great masters think of some of our supreme efforts in this line—a silver stag, for instance, a yard high, given as one of the Royal prizes at Ascot, which never could be even endurable until it tarnished?

The various styles of ornamenting metal are as follows:—

(1) *Zogan*: which includes both damascening and inlaying, is of two kinds, *honzogan* and *nunomezogan*.

*Honzogan* is where the lines are cut of equal depth, but are made wider at the bottom than the top, as in etching by acid. This undercutting is in order to retain the inlay which is hammered in, and which not only completely fills the furrow but usually projects beyond it. If the inlay is left in relief it is called *takazogan*, if it is made level with the surface *hirazogan*.

*Nunomezogan*, which derives its name from having in early days had the grooves incised of a pattern resembling linen mesh, is also of various kinds. In its ruder form the lines are merely cut or scratched, and a leaf of metal is beaten into them and the surface polished. This process is easier and more rapid than *honzogan*, but not so lasting. It has been practised since the eighth century, and has been applied to cast as well as wrought iron.

(2) *Kebori* and *katakiri*, or engraving on metal.

In *kebori* the lines are cut very finely and usually of equal depth and width, the word signifying "hair cutting."

In *katakiri* the graver is used (as a painter would a brush) to produce lines varying in thickness and depth, the



No. 190. —Kane-mono.

effect being produced in a great measure by light and shade on the sides. It is the most artistic and the most esteemed process. No. 188 is an example.

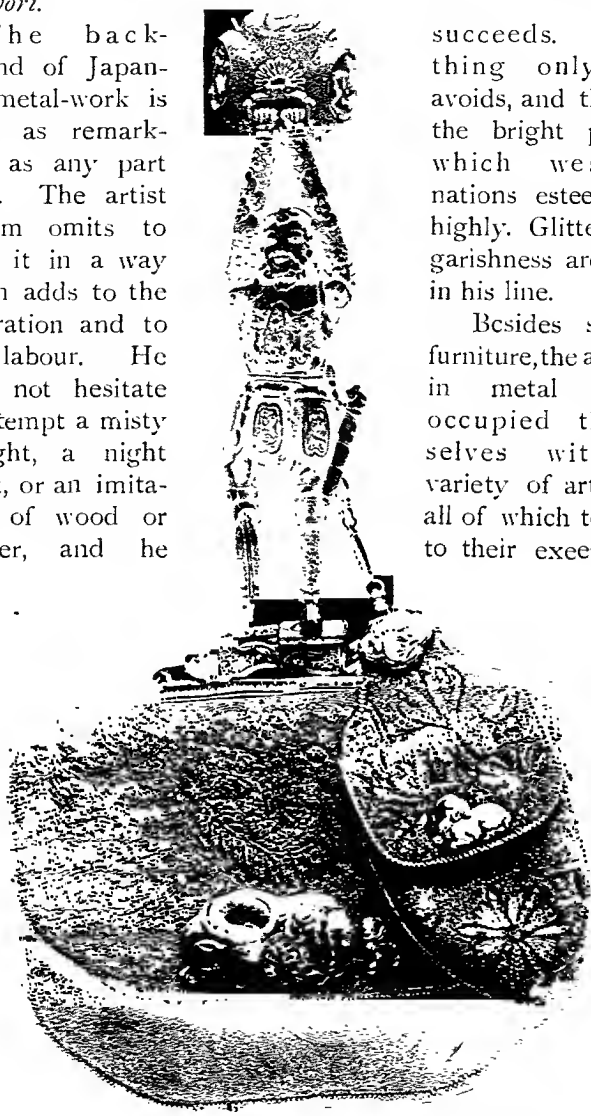
(3) *Nikubori*, or carving in relief, divides itself into *usunikubori*, low, and *takabori*, high relief.

(4) *Uchidashi*, or *repoussé*, which is often combined with *nikubori*.

The background of Japanese metal-work is often as remarkable as any part of it. The artist seldom omits to treat it in a way which adds to the decoration and to his labour. He does not hesitate to attempt a misty twilight, a night effect, or an imitation of wood or leather, and he

succeeds. One thing only he avoids, and that is the bright polish which western nations esteem so highly. Glitter and garishness are not in his line.

Besides sword furniture, the artists in metal have occupied themselves with a variety of articles, all of which testify to their exceeding



No. 191.—Pouch. *Seventeenth Century.* (Sir Trevor Lawrence Collection.)

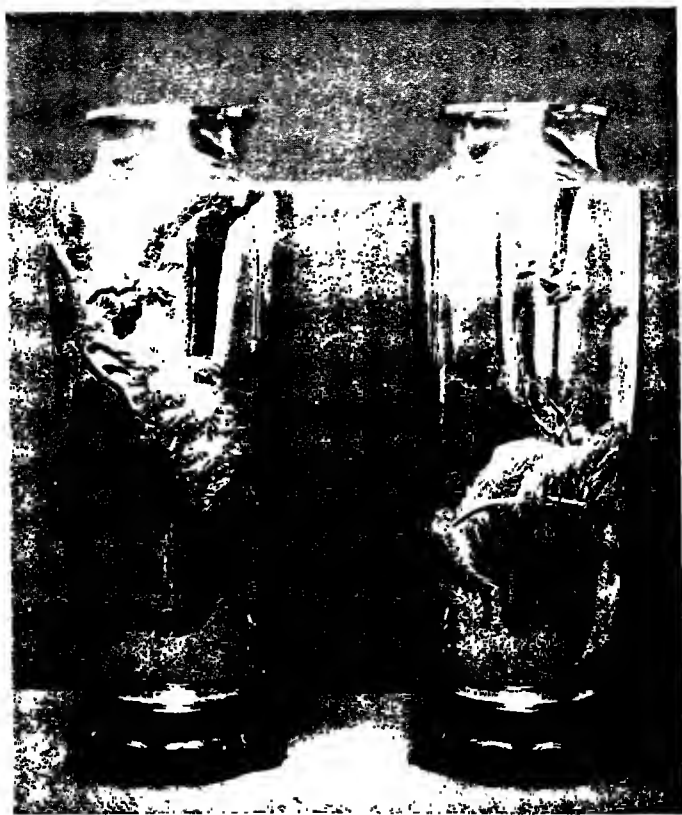
ability with the graver. Articles for the tea ceremony, pipes, hair-pins, ink-pots,<sup>1</sup> brush-holders, perfume-boxes, the clasps



No. 192.—Iron Vase. *By Komat.*

<sup>1</sup> For writing, a brush, a stick of what we call Indian ink, and a roll of paper made from the paper mulberry are used. These are carried on the person: the roll in the breast, the brush and inkstand in a case suspended from the girdle.

(*kanemono*) and beads of their tobacco pouches and their buttons (*kagamibuta*). One must not judge of the last-named from the miserable castings usually offered in curio shops; they do not often appear in the market now, although at



No. 193.—Silver Vase. By *Unno Bisei*.

one time they must have been fairly plentiful for the French collectors to amass such specimens as they have.

No. 191 represents a pouch belonging to Sir Trevor Lawrence. The body is embroidered silk; the figure of the man in armour (evidently produced under European influence) is of iron with gold and silver

ornamentation, the face and hands being of ivory. A similar one was owned by the Empress Frederick. *Kanemono* date, for the most part, from the eighteenth century; No. 190 is of exceptional size; shakudo, gold in



No. 194.—Silver Vase. *Ōshima foun.*

three tones, silver, and lobster-red copper find a place in its composition.

A family of artists who were much in evidence in the latter part of the nineteenth century were the Komai, who produced extraordinary pieces of damascening in gold



(see No. 192). Unfortunately many of the best lack symmetry in form. They command a high price, but not out of proportion to the labour expended upon them.

Our illustrations of present-day metal work show how



No. 195.—Iron Vase. *Yamada Mun'iyoshi* (*Chōzaburō*).

Europeanised it has become, the objects clearly being for foreign use. They are specimens of the best masters, having been amongst those selected by Professor Harada for an article on the Japan-British Exhibition in *The Studio*.

No. 193 is of silver vases by Unno Bisei, one of a family of artists whose work is largely sought for. He studied in Paris, and learnt the art of the medallist, and is now the maker and designer of all the Exhibition medals. The vases illustrated have been acquired by the Imperial household. No. 194 is another silver vase by Ōshima Joun who is noted for his reproductions of carp. He is a teacher at the Fine Art School, Tōkyō. No. 195,



No. 196.—Bronze Jar. *Joun.* (*Author's Collection.*)

an iron vase, is by Yamada Munéyoshi, the ninth of a family of workers in iron. All his productions are the result of arduous hammering from one piece of iron until it is sometimes as thin as paper, when the risks of destruction are great. No. 196 is from a modest purchase by the writer at the Exhibition, a beautiful piece of work not only for the frog's anatomy, but for the metal surface.

## CHAPTER VI

### ENAMELS

ENAMELLING, although one of the oldest of eastern arts and called by that distinguished authority, Sir George Birdwood, the "Master Art craft of the world," has only of recent years attained to any distinction amongst the Art industries of the Japanese, although in their capable hands it has now reached such heights that (in spite of the strivings of France, America, and other nations to rival them) it would seem as if the last word had been said, and the last inventive power expended upon some of their latest productions, the only qualification to this limitless praise being that artistic excellence in subject and form has not always kept pace with mechanical invention.

It is somewhat remarkable that an Art which, upon its importation into China from Arab sources, met with as cordial a reception as it had done many centuries earlier in travelling westward to the Byzantine empire, was not also seized upon by the imitative Japanese—for the time when it was first practised in China, namely, the Mongolian era, and still more the Ming period, when it reached its apogee both in design and colouring, were those when they were in their most receptive mood. But in spite of a determined effort by a recent English connoisseur to place the imperfect efforts of a nineteenth-century enterprise as early specimens of that country's enamelling, there is no doubt that it is only of late years that the manufacture has been taken up, and this delay has been to the detriment of the Art, for had early work been accomplished in the country on the robust lines of that produced by the Chinese

we should not have had that effeminacy and weakness both in colouring and design which does not atone by its



No. 197.—Wireless Cloisonné Plaque. *By Sesuke Namikawa.*

delicacy for the lack of more virile results. It must not be gathered from this that design is not considered in high class

modern cloisonné work, as it is perhaps the most thought-out portion of it, for before anything is attempted in metal it is painted on silk and weighed from every point of view.

To the Japanese the world owes new methods of manufacture, and improvements on old ones that have revolutionised the processes. Amongst these is the substitution of a silver for a copper base, and perhaps the most remarkable, that of cloisonless enamels (*munsen*), the invention of Sosuké Namikawa, whilst to Séishi Namikawa of the same



No. 198.—Wireless Cloisonné Bowl. By Tomotaro Kato.

family is due the perfection to which pictures in enamel have been brought. Both are Court artists.

Besides at the two capitals the Art has been fostered at Nagoya where much work is now turned out and from whence such novelties as *Moriagé* or cloisonné in relief, and *Mutai* or bodiless cloisonné have recently come as the latest adaptations of the western craftsman's skill.

The ordinary process is as follows: The form of the vessel or object on which the enamel is to be placed having been beaten out by the hammer it is then polished

until it attains a perfectly smooth surface which will admit of the design being painted on it. Upon the lines of the drawing wires in gold, silver, or copper, according to the value of the object, are, or should be, firmly brazed on the



No. 199.—Wireless Cloisonné Vase. *By Jubei Ando.*

body, after which the intervening spaces are filled with enamel. It is then subjected to a high temperature under which the enamel is melted. Upon the enamel, much reduced in volume, are now placed coloured enamels, to match those of the design, by means of

a small bamboo spatula, and the whole is again subjected to great heat four times.

The polishing of what is a rough surface is now com-

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menced, and is a very lengthy process, the object having to be gone over very carefully, sometimes as many as ten times, before a perfect surface is arrived at. It can be well understood that failures are not infrequent, and few pieces are altogether flawless.

The originals of our illustrations were all exhibited and much admired at the Japan-British Exhibition. The wild duck alighting at the time of full moon is a wireless plaque by Sosuké Namikawa; the carp bowl is by Tomotaro Kato;

No. 200.—Cloisonné Vase. *By Juju Ando.*

whilst the two vases are by members of the Ando family, Jubei and Juju.

## CHAPTER VII

### POTTERY AND PORCELAIN

THE following chapter has been written expressly for this volume by Mr Charles Holme, who has devoted much time to a study of the subject both in England and in Japan.

The characteristics of the potter's art of old Japan, although especially remarkable and interesting, are probably less generally understood than those of any other of its arts. This arises, it may be, from two causes, one of which is that comparatively few good specimens of old ware are exported, and the other that its particular excellences being, in a measure, different from those which distinguish the ceramic art of the West, are not readily appreciated by western peoples. Even amongst professing connoisseurs the greatest praise is sometimes accorded to objects that least exhibit the characteristics which make the art a worthy one for careful study.

In Europe, at the present day, the highest admiration is too commonly reserved for such examples of the ceramic art as display the richest and most elaborate decoration. The potter, it is to be feared in too many instances, receives less honour than the painter of pottery. All the art associated with the choice of material, the method of manipulation and the mysteries of vitrification, is made but of secondary interest to the ornamentation of the surface by the painter after the object had left the potter's hands. The potter has, as it were, lost his individuality, from want of encouragement to display it in the methods



of his art. He is a mere machine, constrained to fashion his work from one year's end to another in subservience to the requirements of the painter-decorator. The exigencies of modern manufacture induce a division of labour often destructive to art in the craft, and in none more so than the potter's.

In viewing the subject of the pottery of Japan we have, perhaps, too frequently done so from our own especial standpoint. We have admired those objects on which a wealth of decoration or painter's work has been displayed, and have considered of far less moment the evidences of individuality in the choice of material and the fashioning of the pot itself. The Japanese have not been slow to understand the nature of the objects that have met with our greatest approval, and the immense quantities of ware which they have made for our especial gratification during the last forty years testify, not only to their power of adaptation, but also to their unrivalled qualities as pottery painters.

Admirable as many of these latter-day productions are from certain points of view, they must not in any way be confounded with those of former times ; indeed, they are for the most part opposed to the traditions and ethics which governed the work of the old potters.

The potter of old Japan lived, as did other craftsmen, under very different conditions to the European, or even the Japanese potter of to-day. He laboured, not to secure large orders from the community, but to give pleasure to his patron, and to advance his own reputation as an artist. He tried to infuse originality into his work, and every process of his manufacture received some measure of careful thought.

That his models were taken in the first instance from China and Corea is abundantly evident from native history, but that he was not content to reproduce them in slavish imitation is equally apparent. He was, at all times, ready to learn all that could be learnt from those countries in the methods of his art—in the character and composition

of clays and enamels ; but all his productions had a *cachet* of their own, and were not to be confounded with their prototypes.

As a potter, the first matter which called for his attention was the nature of the clay to be employed by him, then came the method of its manipulation, and finally, the character of glaze and the question of decoration. Throughout all the various processes he had ever to be governed by the practical consideration of how the object might be best adapted to the use for which it was intended. How successfully these requirements were met, and how much originality and interest he was able to infuse into each of his operations, is apparent to every careful student of his works. Truly was he, in his palmyest days, an artist-potter, and not a mere machine working for the glorification of a brother of the brush. In this fact lies the especial charm of his productions.

It has been said that the *chanoyu*, or tea ceremony (p. 122), had an immense influence on the potter's art in Japan, and it has been thought by some that this influence was of a nature that rather retarded than helped the progress of the art. The *chajin*, or leaders of the ceremony, were eminently conservative in their principles. They delighted in old things and old ways, sometimes, it may be, solely on account of their antiquity. That they should value the objects made for their cult by the early fathers of the pottery industry, even though they might be of the rudest description, can well be imagined. In what country is such a spirit altogether absent? But although history shows this to have been the case, it also shows that the influence of the *chajin* was continuously exercised in the advancement of the art. Men of original talent were patronised by them, and new developments of the art were encouraged. If the impulse of genius may have sometimes been restrained by them, the restraint was rather of a guiding nature than of a preventive one. If they did not encourage the production of such wares as pass current for artistic ones in western countries, it must be remembered that their



requirements were of a limited order. The very simple utensils employed in their function did not admit of an exuberance of artistic fancy. It may be, as some assert, that the potters became so imbued with the ethics of the *chanoyu*, that they allowed themselves to be governed in all their productions, whether for ceremonial or other purposes, by the advice of the *chajin*. But it is more natural to suppose that the refinements of the tea ceremony, and the precepts of its leaders, were not so much the origin as the outcome of the spirit which animated native art from its beginning.<sup>1</sup>

As a people, the Japanese are singularly free from ostentation, and their homes exhibit a simplicity and refinement in all their surroundings which render them unique. They are devoted admirers of nature's art. As in woodwork, the ornamental value of the natural grain, or the rugosities of the bark, are considered of such high interest that remarkable specimens are accorded the most honourable place in the house; as in metal-work, the patina is looked upon as its chief beauty; so in earthenware, the earthiness of earth has to them a charm which should not be hidden, but developed by the work of the artist. The peculiarities, therefore, of the potter's art in Japan must not be considered to have been governed by an artificial ceremony, any more than that of the workers in wood and metal, but rather to have been the expression of the fundamental characteristics of the people—characteristics which, it is more than probable, had their inception in certain tenets of Buddhism.

Yet it was immediately affected by the tea ceremony in respect to the forms of the objects required in it. The most important of these were tea-jars (*chairé*, illustration 95), in which powdered tea was kept, and tea-bowls (*chawan*), in which it was mixed with hot water, and from which it was drunk. It is in these objects, more especially the latter, upon which a greater measure of freedom of thought was expended,

<sup>1</sup> See "Chanoyu," *Trans. Jap. Soc.*, vol. v. 42, and "The Pottery of the Chanoyu," *ib.*, vol. viii.

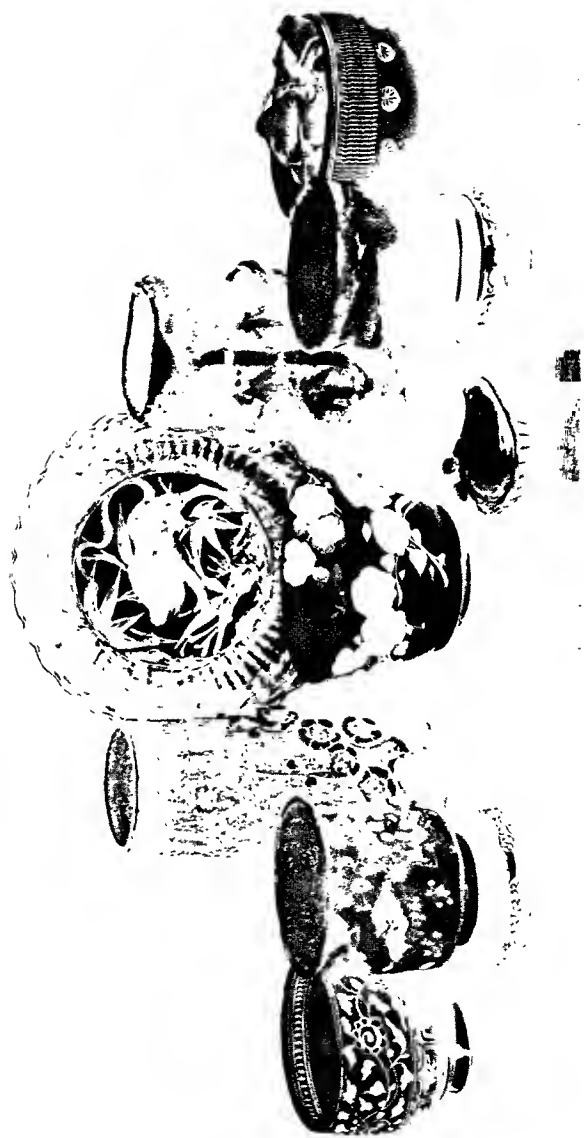
that some of the most interesting work of the artist-potters of Japan appears. Tea-jars and tea-bowls were the gift of princes to especially favoured friends. They were highly treasured and carefully preserved by their owners in brocade bags and small boxes, and were only brought out upon special occasions, to be handled with the greatest care.

The burning of incense, whether in connection with the tea ceremony, the incense game—a popular amusement in polite circles—or for other purposes, also brought into use certain utensils often fashioned in pottery by the best makers. Scent-boxes (*kogo*), in which little tablets of incense were kept, braziers (*koro*), in which they were burned, and clove boilers (*chojiburo*), vessels in which cloves were boiled to give an aromatic odour to a room, are the forms usually met with; and these often present such ingenuity of idea in their construction and decoration as to render them scarcely, if at all, inferior in interest to the tea-jars and tea-bowls.

Among the other forms made by the artist-potters of Japan may be cited vases for the arrangement of flowers (*hanaike*). These were made to stand in the recessed portion of the living-room, known as the *tokonoma*, to hang against a post, or to be suspended by cords from the ceiling. As they were actually used to hold flowers, and were not merely flower vases in name, they were so made as to help by contrast of effect the beauty of the flowers contained in them; and in attempting a criticism of their artistic merits this fact must ever be borne in mind. Tea pots and cups for ordinary tea drinking, *sake* kettles, bottles and cups, water-bottles and other domestic articles, were also made by famous ceramic artists; but, as a rule, such objects as these, being for general use, were produced in the way of trade by less renowned potters. The great majority of domestic utensils for table use were, and still are, made of lacquered wood.

Although the Japanese have been eminently successful in their production of porcelain, some critics claiming for

certain makes a degree of superiority even to Chinese porcelain, it does not appear to have taken so strong a hold on the art instincts of the people as it did in China. Porcelain is a queenly material that demands a most devoted service from him who desires to show its qualities in perfection. The potter cannot do what he likes with it, or get the variety of effects he can from the grosser earths. It may be partly for this reason that so many of the most famous ceramic artists in Japan worked but little in it; and they may also have been determined, to a certain extent, in their choice by the fact that porcelain earth was not obtainable in all parts of Japan, whereas suitable clays for pottery-making might be found in varying qualities in almost every province. Be the reason what it may, it is certain that the Japanese take much interest in the qualities of the earth of which their utensils are made. These are very varied. Some wares, such as the ancient ones of Shigaraki and Iga, are fashioned in an earth almost as coarse as fine gravel; others, such as those of Satsuma and Isé, are of great fineness, and the porcelain of Hirado is justly celebrated for the extreme delicacy of its paste. The Raku ware of Kyōto is somewhat soft and tender, while the products of the Bizen province have an almost metallic hardness. Each of these qualities is appreciated by the Japanese, and, in many cases, they are singularly well adapted to the uses to which the objects made of them were put. Thus, the soft paste of the Raku bowls, destined to contain hot tea, and by the custom of the *chanoyu* to be clasped in both hands in the act of drinking, is especially suitable, being a feeble conductor of heat, to the purpose required. A bowl made of it could not fail to be much more agreeable in use than one of porcelain; and, moreover, it would retain the heat in the liquid for a much longer period. The remarkable hardness of Bizen stoneware adapts it to use as incense-burners or pots to contain fire, and it is therefore often employed for that purpose. The great toughness and fineness of the paste also render it a very good medium for modelling,



Eiraku.

Kiyomidzu.

Shiganaki.

No. 202.  
Kutani.  
Eiraku.Kutani.  
Yatsushiro.

Hozen of Kyōto.

Eiraku.

(C. Holme Collection.)

and work of this nature of the greatest excellence was sometimes made of it.

It is a noteworthy fact that on most examples of old Japan ware, however they might be otherwise enamelled or decorated, certain portions were left uncovered, so as to expose the earth of which they were composed. This is especially the case with the bowls and jars used in the tea ceremony. The glaze upon these was usually so applied as to leave bare the lower exterior part of the vessel. This method had two advantages: the bottom of the object was kept clear of the irregularities that would be caused by the uneven running of the glaze upon it, and it permitted the earth to be inspected and criticised by the guests—an important detail of the ceremony.

In fashioning objects into shape the Japanese potter adopted many methods. Although the throwing wheel was in early use—having been introduced in Japan in the seventh century, as some assert by a priest named Giyogi—it was never permitted to entirely monopolise the potter's manner of work. Throughout the entire history of Japanese ceramics, tea and other vessels have been fashioned entirely by hand or by the aid of the modelling tool. Many are the examples, especially in the wares of Iga, Kyōto, Seto, and Soma, dexterously manipulated into quaint forms that charm the eye with evidences of artistic feeling. Of such a nature are the Raku tea-bowls before referred to. Introduced in the sixteenth century by Ameya, a Corean, Raku ware was perfected by his son Chojiro, aided, it is said, by the advice of a *chajin*. An interesting series of bowls of this ware is exhibited in the South Kensington Museum, which includes pieces made by each generation of makers excepting the first. The shape of these bowls varies slightly in almost every piece that is made. We may note in many of these examples some irregularities of shape on the sides of the bowls, a curious turning in and rounding of the rims, and an entire freedom from sharp edges and angularities. All these features are the result of much consideration on the part of the potter.



The irregularities of shape on the sides enable the tea-drinker to obtain a better grasp of the bowl ; the turned-in rims lessen the danger of the liquor being spilled when passed from one guest to another, and the softened curves and rounded edges minimise the risk of breakage, which otherwise would be somewhat great, owing to the fragile nature of the ware. The art of it lies in the eloquence it displays of its earthy nature, just as the art of old Venetian glass lies in the witness it bears of its vitreous one.

The small unglazed teapots bearing the mark of "Banko," made in recent years by various potters of Yokkaichi and Kuwana, in the province of Isé, delicately fashioned as they are between finger and thumb in ever-changing variety of manner, are familiar and popular instances of the charm and possibilities of work modelled by the hand alone. It is to be regretted, however, that so many examples of this interesting modern ware are spoiled by hastiness in finish and weakness in decoration.

The Japanese artist is not ashamed of his hands or his tools, and just as he delights to show the marks of the brush in a rapid sketch or in an example of bold calligraphy, so he prefers to see the natural marks, be they made by hand or by tool, caused in the fashioning of his pottery. It is in such peculiarities that the work of the artist-potter may generally be recognised. The figures of Ki-Seto or Yellow Seto, of Takatori or of Tōkyō, crisply modelled with the bamboo spatula, owe not a little of their vigorous charm to the frank evidences they bear of the method of their production.

In the case of vessels formed on the throwing wheel, we often find much independence of thought displayed in their finish. Instead of obliterating the ridges made by the fingers in throwing an object into shape, they are sometimes retained, and even accentuated, with a resulting freedom from the machine-like perfection to which ordinary turned ware is brought. The object may also be otherwise modelled in a pleasant quaintness of form. Abundant

examples showing these characteristics will be found in almost any collection of old Japanese pottery.

The regard which the Japanese show for every natural feature of an object may again be illustrated in their retention of the *itoguiré*, or mark on the base of a vessel, caused by the thread or wire used to detach it from the wheel. The appearance of the mark is that of a series of loops, one within the other, converging sometimes to the right and sometimes to the left, and is especially to be observed in early tea-jars. The make of a vessel, otherwise, perhaps, a little doubtful, may frequently be decided by the particular form or direction of these thread marks. In their absence, as in the case of bowls or other vessels having a projecting rim around the base, other characteristic marks appear. These may consist of the name of the maker or the pottery, sometimes incised with the spatula, sometimes stamped with a seal, and sometimes painted. In the absence of a signature, a peculiar spiral or other mark may attest the maker. In the illustrations to the work on Japanese Pottery by Ninagawa Noritané, the bases of most of the objects figured are also shown—a fact that lends to it much additional value.

Toshiro, a Japanese potter of the early thirteenth century, made a special visit to China to perfect himself in his art, and on his return to his native town of Seto, in Owari, he introduced great improvements in the character of the wares made there. Although the glazing of pottery may have been practised in Japan at a much earlier date than the time of Toshiro, there is no doubt that it was owing to his exertions that a great impetus was given to the art. He not only improved the quality of vitreous enamels, but he introduced new and more artistic methods of their application. From his time forward, great attention was paid to this branch of the potter's art, of which it soon became one of the most important and interesting features. To know something of Japanese glazes is to be familiar with the soft greenish greys of the Sanda Seiji ware, the dull leaden blue or the metallic sheen of the

brown glaze of Bizen, the iridescent blacks, reds, browns, and bottle-greens of the Raku wares, the lustrous yellow-brown of Ohi, the splashed Oribé wares, the thick opaque overglazes of Shigaraki, the delicate greys and salmon shades of Hagi, the heavy brown and yellow glazes of Tamba, or the speckled greys and browns of Soma. These and many others of like interest and beauty, as they are better known, and their characteristics better understood, have an ever-increasing charm to the earnest and sympathetic student, who soon ceases to wonder, as perchance he may at first have done, at the artistic value in which they are held by the Japanese connoisseur.

Crackled effects in the glaze are sometimes highly interesting. They are caused by a rapid cooling of the enamel, and become a serious defect unless managed with especial skill. If the fissures are too open, the vessel is rendered porous and unfit to hold a liquid, and little flakes of glaze sometimes become detached and fall away. In the choicest examples of Japanese crackled wares, the fissures, although at first sight apparently broad, are, actually, extremely fine, and can only be detected on the face of the enamel by the aid of a powerful magnifying glass. Their apparent breadth is caused by the black or reddish stain which fills them, and penetrates the enamel on either side. Sometimes the crackle does not appear at all on the surface of the enamel, the fissures being apparently closed by a process of refiring; and, in certain examples, a thin overglaze effectually covers them. In an ordinary faulty craze, such as may frequently be seen in European glazed pottery, the fissures are very irregularly disposed, occurring in patches or in long unbroken lines. In a perfect crackle, the lines should be well broken up, and be of uniform size all over the enamel. In some cases, especially in those where a heavy opaque white enamel is used, the crackle is sparsely displayed, and it is in such examples that the fissures are usually filled in with colouring matter. The fine cream-coloured Satsuma and Awata wares are noted for the minute character of their crackle,



No. 203.—Satsuma Ware.

Nishikidô.

Bekko-Gusmi.

(*C. Holme Collection.*)

Honkido.

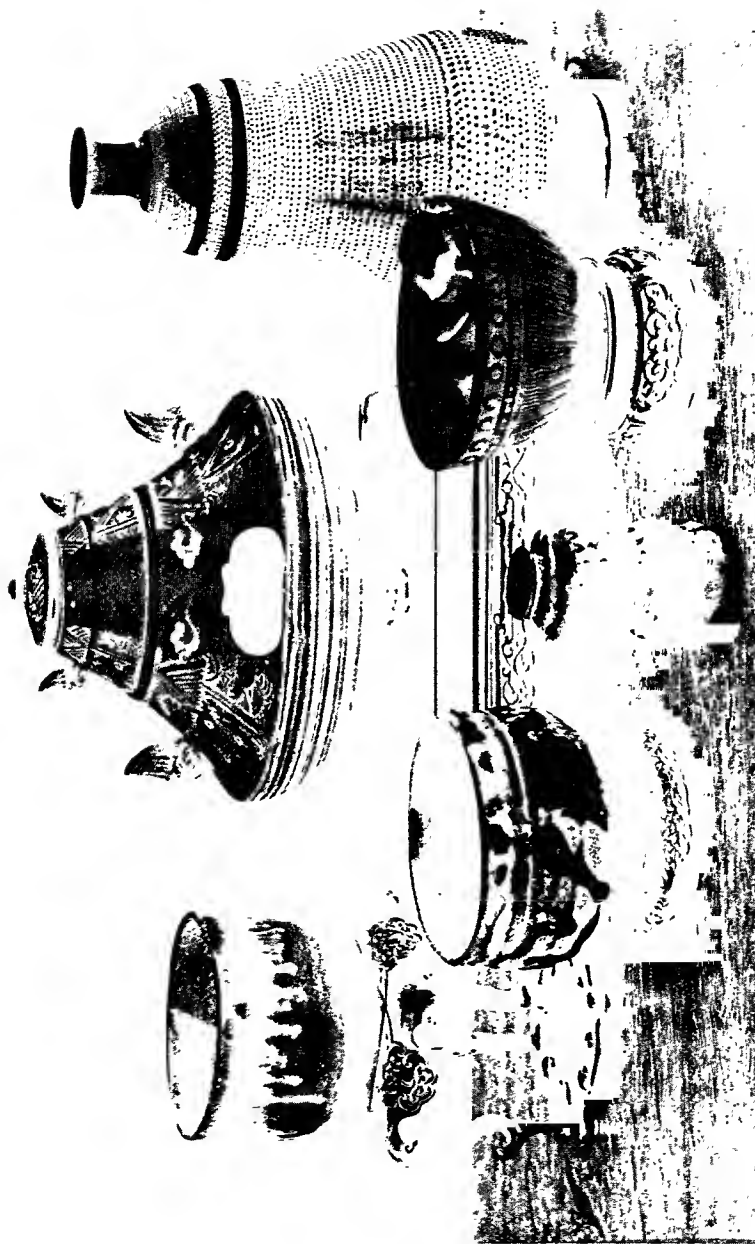
Shirosé.

and, in choice specimens, the crazed lines are so fine and so close together as scarcely to be perceptible to the naked eye. Some writers declare this extreme fineness of crackle to be a distinguishing characteristic of genuine Satsuma wares; but the Awata potters frequently produced examples vying in this respect with the finest Satsuma. There is no doubt but that the production of the most perfect crackles was a matter of special manipulation, and their exact reproduction has been found to be by European potters a difficulty not readily surmountable.

It was probably from Corea that the Japanese obtained their first ideas in reference to the decoration of pottery. Ninagawa Noritané says that the early pottery vessels of Japan—and he is speaking of a period as far back as the third century A.D.—“made after the system of this country (Corea) presented in their interior a wave pattern, such as is still in use to-day, and on their exterior were parallel lines arranged in the form of squares.” These patterns were moulded in relief and not painted, and may sometimes be seen in examples of modern Satsuma and Kyōto wares.

A later class of decoration introduced in Japan by potters from Corea is the Mishima style, which consists of simple patterns, sometimes incised, sometimes stamped in the body of the object, and filled in, before being glazed, with a white or black “slip,” or paste. This ware has been produced in several districts of Japan, and, among others, in the province of Satsuma, where potters were brought from Corea after the invasion of that country by Hidéyoshi in the sixteenth century. The simple lines, stars, and dots of Satsuma Mishima exhibit but little fertility of imagination, and, on this account, it is much less interesting than the same class of ware produced at Yatsushiro, in the province of Higo, which in potting, in glaze, and in decoration is far superior.

The influence of China in the matter of decoration has been most directly displayed in the porcelain of Japan. The use of cobalt blue in underglazed painting was introduced early in the sixteenth century by Gorodayu Shonzui,



No. 204.--Satsuma Wares.

Sunkoroku.

Mishima.

Mishima.

Séto-Gusuri  
(Torafu).

Séto-Gusuri.

Séto-Gusuri,  
(C. Holme Collection.)

a Japanese, the father of the porcelain industry in Japan. After studying the art in China, it is often asserted that he brought home with him all the materials necessary for the manufacture of porcelain, including the earth, the colour, and the glazes. He settled in the Hizen province, and this soon became the great centre for this branch of the ceramic art, suitable materials of every description for its manufacture being found native there. About the middle of the seventeenth century a pottery was started by the Prince of Hirado at Mikawaji. The blue and white porcelain produced there was of the finest description both as to quality and decoration, and was made solely for the use of the prince, or for gifts to notable personages or friends.

Also, about the same time, overglaze enamel painting was commenced by Tokuzayemon, a native of Imari, who learnt the process from a Chinaman. The art rapidly spread, and many potteries were established in the Hizen province, especially at Arita, for the production of the new ware. A large trade in it was soon entered into with the Dutch, whose commercial transactions at Deshima were, at that time, important. Their exportations found their way to all parts of Europe, and are now familiarly known in sale-rooms as "old Japan."

As might naturally be expected, in copying the Chinese methods of porcelain manufacture, the Japanese also copied Chinese forms and the characteristics of Chinese decoration, more especially as these forms and this class of decoration were precisely what their patrons, the Dutch, most preferred. In China, as in Europe, porcelain vases and other objects are frequently used solely for their decorative value, or in other words, as ornaments about a house. For this purpose large pieces with effectively coloured designs are especially valuable, and hence were made to supply the Dutch demands; just as similar pieces are made to-day in obedience to general western requirements.

The Japanese had no use themselves for objects of this character, and at all times preferred simple and unpretentious methods of decoration. Of the Hizen productions

in porcelain, the Sometsuki, or blue and white, seemed to appeal more directly to their art instincts; and it is, therefore, particularly in this class of ware, and especially in the Hirado porcelain, which was not produced as an article of commerce, that the true native characteristics displayed themselves. The perfect quality of the porcelain of this ware, prepared as it was with the greatest labour and skill, the soft milk-white character of its glaze, the translucent colour and careful finish of the underglaze decoration, seem so to be in harmony with each other as to make a perfect whole. The true quality of porcelain seems to have been entirely realised, and every operation brought up to an equal standard of delicacy of finish. It may be that the colour of the blue of the best Japanese ware is more retiring or quiet in effect than that of the best Chinese, and the decoration less assertive or "effective," but in this effect it illustrates the native characteristics. Nankin "blue" will appeal to those who value it for the part it plays so well in a scheme of room decoration. Hirado blue will be best appreciated when viewed as a perfect work of art in itself. Each ware possesses certain qualities of beauty the other has not.

Overglaze decoration was called by the Japanese *Gosai*, or five colours, in allusion to the number of colours which were at first actually employed. It is now termed *Nishikidô*, or brocade painting. The painting of Kakiyemon, who worked in conjunction with Tokuzayemon in this style, is generally considered to be more characteristically Japanese than that of other Hizen painters; and such examples of his works that are still preserved show a simplicity and purity of colour and line, combined with a delicacy of workmanship, that proclaim him to have been an undoubted artist. But it was reserved to Ninsei, a Kyôto potter of the seventeenth century, to be the first to give an entirely Japanese expression to this class of decoration (No. 203).

In the work of Ninsei there was no *bouleversement* of the methods of the old potter's art. Such innovations as



he introduced were so incorporated with the old as to appear only as a legitimate development. Earth, manipulation, glaze, crackle—all manifested a power of selection, workmanship, and invention that probably has never been surpassed. Captain Brinkley, speaking of him, says: "Not only was the *pâte* of his pieces close and hard, but the crackle of the buff or cream-coloured glaze was almost as regular as the meshes of a spider's web. Only the most painstaking manipulation of materials and management of temperature in stoving could have accomplished such results." And again: "His monochrome glazes are scarcely less remarkable than his crackle; first among them must be placed a metallic black run over a grass-green in such a way that the latter shows sufficiently to correct any sombreness of effect. On the surface of this glaze, or else in reserved medallions of cream-like crackle, are painted diaper and floral designs in gold, silver, red, and other coloured enamels. Another glaze invented by him, and imitated by the chief experts amongst his successors, is a pearl-white, through which a pink blush seems to spread."

Ninagawa Noritané says that his earlier works were decorated with designs of the Kanō School, and his later ones with those of the Tosa School. The free sketchy character of his earlier method appealed strongly to Japanese taste, and found many imitators, who, unfortunately, were not always content simply to copy his style, but stamped their productions with a seal bearing his name. The study of many examples of his ware would be necessary to give anything like a fair idea of the versatility of his genius. M. Gonse has well said, "It would appear that each piece which left his hands was the fruit of an effort of special invention, of an attentive study of manufacture." It is related that Ninsei erected kilns in various districts of Kyōto, and work in these was carried on by his pupils and followers, who usually stamped their wares with the name of the district in which they were produced.

Kenzan, who lived in Kyōto during the early period of his long life (A.D. 1663-1743), was probably the most original of the Kyōto potters after Ninsei. Brother of Kōrin, the artist and lacquer-worker, he displayed not a few of the remarkable characteristics which rendered Kōrin famous. He was, in fact, the exponent in pottery decoration of the Kōrin School (p. 191)—a school which, as Mr Anderson says, had an influence upon industrial design more strongly marked than that of any other before the time of Hokusai. The majority of his Kyōto works were produced in the fine Awata paste, but he also employed the coarse clay of Shigaraki and other varieties. Sometimes his vessels were fashioned upon the wheel, and sometimes entirely by hand. The nature of his glazes, and the method of their application, varied also very greatly, as well as did the character of the decoration. In his early days he was very successful in his imitation of the Raku wares of the Chojiro (see No. 203).

The broad treatment and bright colours sometimes affected by Kenzan in his decorated wares may cause such works to appear to the eye, at first sight, somewhat crude; but a more intimate acquaintance convinces the student that their every detail is by a master hand. Like his brother, he was a true impressionist, who sought in decoration for effects beyond mere mechanical detail of form—effects resulting from contrast or from harmony of colour or material, from balance of composition and distribution of parts, or which exhibited power and freedom of the hand; and, above all, in which there was ever present the exalted poetic feeling characteristic of the master art-work of Japan. His works were not such as would be likely to appeal to the masses. They were the very antithesis of pretty. One may imagine them to be that of a man who did not care whether he pleased any one but himself or not; who had remarkable boldness of ideas, and the courage to carry them out. They are eminently suggestive, and each example appears to show some fresh idea. Their rarity alone is to be regretted.

In any history of the Kyōto potters, such names as Kinkozan, Rokubei, Taizan, Tanzan, Eiraku, Dohachi, Mokubei, must stand prominently forth as worthy exponents of the Art of Japan. The two latter worked occasionally in porcelain, in the production of which they were highly successful. The *kinrandé*, or gold brocade decoration of Eiraku Riozen, brought to him some especial repute. This class of decoration consists of designs of mythological animals, flowers, etc., elaborately painted in gold upon a red ground. The careful finish of the work showed great technical skill; but, as its name implies, it was little more than an adaptation of the patterns and colours of the brocade weaver, and would be equally beautiful and appropriate if it were painted on a piece of paper or a modern sheet-iron coal-box. Fortunately for his reputation this was not the only class of ware made by Eiraku, whose quaintly fashioned and decorated earthenware prove him to have been a potter worthy to take rank with the others we have named (No. 204).

Soon after the establishment of porcelain manufacture in the Hizen province, Prince Mayeda, of Kaga, sent over a potter to Arita to study the methods of the new art. This potter, upon his return, commenced to make at Kutani the wares for which that village afterwards became so famous. It was not, however, until the end of the seventeenth century, when Morikagé commenced his labours, that any notable examples were produced. It is related that Morikagé received instruction in painting from the great artist Kanō Tanyū. The boldness and effectiveness of the sure and rapid touch of the Kanō School is well shown in the specimens attributed to Morikagé. The translucent brilliancy of his enamel colours—purple, green, and yellow—add not a little to the decorative value of his work.

The gold and red, or *kinrandé* decoration, applied in more recent years by the Kutani artists upon pairs of vases, large plates, etc., is distinctively Chinese in character, and exhibits, with some exceptions, but little of the true spirit of Japanese ceramic art.

Towards the end of the eighteenth century, or early in the nineteenth, the Satsuma potters, who had hitherto been content to leave undecorated the beautiful cream-coloured faience made by them, or to copy the primitive ornament of their Corean ancestors, became alive to the beauties of overglaze painting as practised by the Kyōto potters, and of its suitability to be applied to their own wares. Some of their fraternity were, therefore, sent to Kyōto to study the art as practised there. Such good use did they make of their time, and so well were they able to apply the lessons they had learnt, that upon their return they commenced the production of that which has brought the name of Satsuma into repute throughout the civilised world. *Nishikidō*, or brocade-painted Satsuma, as the ware decorated with gold and overglaze colours is called, was never made in large quantities. The expense of its production was too great to permit of its general use. It was from the first an *article de luxe*, for the use only of the Daimyō or for presents to his friends, and to those whom he wished to honour. No wonder, therefore, that genuine examples of the ware are scarce and rarely to be seen. But the demand which arose for it in later years for export to Europe and America caused imitations to be made in various parts of Japan, some of which so closely copy the characteristics of the original ware as to deceive any but the most practised connoisseurs. Especially is it difficult to detect those pieces which are genuine Satsuma in so far as the ware itself is concerned, and false only in the origin of the decoration.

Professor Morse, in an article on "Old Satsuma," in *Harper's Monthly* for September 1888, says: "By constant use it became richly though lightly coloured, and one at all familiar with the first colouring of a meerschaum may form some idea of a bit of old Satsuma; and having used this comparison, it may be carried still farther by adding that artificially coloured or stained Satsuma recalls the appearance of a spurious or cheap meerschaum; indeed, the simile may be completed by stating that a good deal

of pride is taken in the gradual colouring of a bit of Satsuma by constant use, and a peculiar yellow cloth is kept at hand to polish the glaze from time to time, very much as a smoker polishes his pipe." Modern Satsuma is much whiter than the similar class of ware made in Kyōto and Awaji, and in consequence it is not appreciated by the western buyer, who finds it too "cold" in effect. Hence, in order to please him, it is stained by the Japanese to the required shade. Many a foreigner will purchase a stained piece in preference to an unstained one, although he knows it to be stained and quite a modern example. The Japanese should not, therefore, be burdened with all the blame sometimes attached to them for the production of modern "old" Satsuma.

The *pâte* of old Satsuma is much denser and finer than in modern productions, that of more recent work being coarser and of a white, chalky appearance. The decoration is somewhat sparsely distributed, and does not entirely cover up the object, as upon the Tōkyō and Ōsaka painted imitations (?) especially favoured by the European buyer. The forms in which it was made were small in size, and consisted of the usual shapes in native use, such as bowls, clove-boilers, incense-burners, scent-boxes, etc. Well-modelled figures (*okinono*) have also been made by the Satsuma potters, who, indeed, enjoy some repute in Japan at the present day for the excellence of their work of that nature (Nos. 205 and 206).

Among the varieties of Satsuma pottery not commonly known in the West may be cited the *Seto-gusuri*, *Mishima*, *Sunkoroku*, *Jakatsu-gusuri*, and *Bekko-gusuri*. Some quite variously coloured glazes might be roughly classed under the title of *Seto-gusuri*, or Seto glaze, although it cannot be said that they bear any close resemblance to their prototype. One of these, of an olive-brown shade flecked with spots or streaks of blue or bluish white, is, perhaps, the most typical of the Satsuma *flambé* glazes. Another, a thin yellow glaze over a brown *pâte*, with an overglaze of greenish brown in which are splashes of a reddish brown,

is called *Torafu* or tiger skin. A third variety is of an olive-green shade; a fourth a soft black, and a fifth in which specks of iron dust appear within the glaze.

The *Sunkoroku* style, it is stated, is derived from a coarsely decorated ware of Arabian origin. It is painted all over with patterns in brown upon a creamy-white or greyish-white glaze. The ware is well potted in fine clay, and the patterns embrace a remarkable variety of diapers of Japanese or Chinese character. *Jakatsu-gusurik*, or dragon glaze, consists of large detached globules of glaze placed close to each other, and supposed to resemble dragon's scales. *Bekko-gusuri*, or tortoiseshell glaze, consists of a warm yellow overglaze upon cream white with splashes of brown glaze superimposed.

Other varieties of Satsuma pottery are described by Captain Brinkley in his excellent work, "Japan and China," vol. viii.

Some most interesting collections of the smaller objects in Japanese porcelain and pottery have been made by amateurs. Especially worthy of note are the little pots and covers made to hold pastilles, and called *K'ogo*. These objects have been produced in every district in Japan, and a well selected collection of them may contain examples by all the great masters of the ceramic art. Whether regarded from the point of view of material, of form, or of decoration, they are admirable in their variety and manner of treatment, and they have the advantage of being still obtainable at moderate prices.

Collections of small teapots and of water-bottles as used with writing sets have been made by various amateurs, and found to be most remarkable in their variety and daintiness.

#### MODERN CERAMIC ART IN JAPAN

The opening of Japan to western influences has had a remarkable effect on the character of the pottery wares produced there. Western buyers have demanded examples suitable to their own requirements and the production of

highly decorated wares has been greatly stimulated. The potters have adapted themselves quickly to the new conditions and from all the great centres of the ceramic industry



No. 205.—Vase by Miyagawa  
Kozan, Yokohama.

in Japan enormous quantities of porcelain and faience have been shipped to all parts of the world.

Of the ordinary commercial wares it is not necessary here to take note. But it is pleasant to find that side by side with the commonplace productions some of con-

siderable artistic merit are still produced. In the great exhibitions held in France, Austria, United States, and England during the last forty years there have been many specimens shown in the Japanese courts of the highest character—specimens which will bear favourable comparison with the finest modern productions of China, or of Europe.



No. 206.—Vase by Miyagawa Kozan, Yokohama.

Among the potters who deserve especial praise may be mentioned, in the first place, Miyagawa Kozan of Ota, Yokohama, commonly known as Makuzu. About the period 1880 to 1885 there were produced by or under the direction of this potter many large vases in faience upon which were modelled in high relief figures of eagles, storks, bears, and other similar subjects. Although these were



often in themselves very clever examples of the modeller's art, they were ill suited to vase decoration and their extreme liability to breakage soon rendered them un-



No. 207.—Vase by Shimidsu Rokubei,  
Kyōto.

popular among western buyers. More legitimate and satisfactory were the coloured and decorated porcelains which this potter afterwards produced, based, more or less, on Chinese wares of the best periods. His paintings

under glaze in soft greys and blues and in other delicate tints have a *cachet* of their own, which in their turn have been a source of inspiration to more than one European manufacturer of repute. His rich monochrome colour



No. 208.—Vase decorated  
by Yabu Meizan.

glazes have deservedly met with the highest commendation from connoisseurs of such wares. Indeed, taken as a whole, his productions are of so varied and so high a character that he may justly be considered to be one of the greatest potters of the present age.

The potters of Kyōto have justly been held in high repute for centuries, and the work of the living descendants of Kinkozan and of Rokubei worthily uphold the reputation of their ancestors. Add to these the names of Seifu and Chikusen who studied respectively under the second and third Dohachi. Both these artists have a great repute

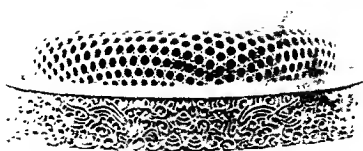


No. 209.—Plate by Kinkozan Sobei of Kyōto.

with their countrymen for the delicacy and beauty of their productions.

Yabu Meizan of Ōsaka is well known in Europe and America for painted faience, the minutiae of which has probably never been equalled in the history of ceramics. He is an excellent colourist and some of his finely painted birds and flowers are especially beautiful in drawing and composition.

Masataro Keida of Kagoshima, Satsuma, has the reputation of being the most skilled potter of his province. His finely and delicately pierced and chiselled work is a marvel of technical skill, so much so, indeed, that one wonders at times if so much patience and dexterity is not almost misplaced when applied to material of such frangibility as soft paste faience.



No. 210.—Incense-Burner. *Masataro Keida, Satsuma.*

Many other living potters in Japan of great excellence might be cited, but to do so, and to do justice to the present condition of the Art in Japan, and properly to set forth its characteristics and its many excellencies, would require a space at least equal in bulk to the present volume.



No. 211.—Porcelain Bowl. *By Mura Chikusen.*



No. 212.—Brocade, with Harpy and Vine Decoration. *Eighth Century.*

## CHAPTER VIII

### TEXTILES AND EMBROIDERIES

“*Kokio ye nishiki.*” “When you return home wear brocade,” i.e., make out that your journey has been a success.—*Japanese proverb.*

THIS handbook having, at the outset, been framed more for the dilettante than the student, and the large area that it covers limiting descriptions of any industry within a space that prohibits its being dealt with exhaustively, especially if it be one of which the manufacture is a matter of common knowledge, I, in earlier editions, gave but scant information concerning the subject with which this chapter deals. But Japan fortunately possesses amongst its manufacturers those who are not satisfied with supplying the needs of the masses, or with resting on the achievements of the past, and in no branch of her arts is she still achieving higher triumphs than in textiles and embroideries. Consequently, even if I am only able to touch the fringe of the matter, mention of it must not be foregone.

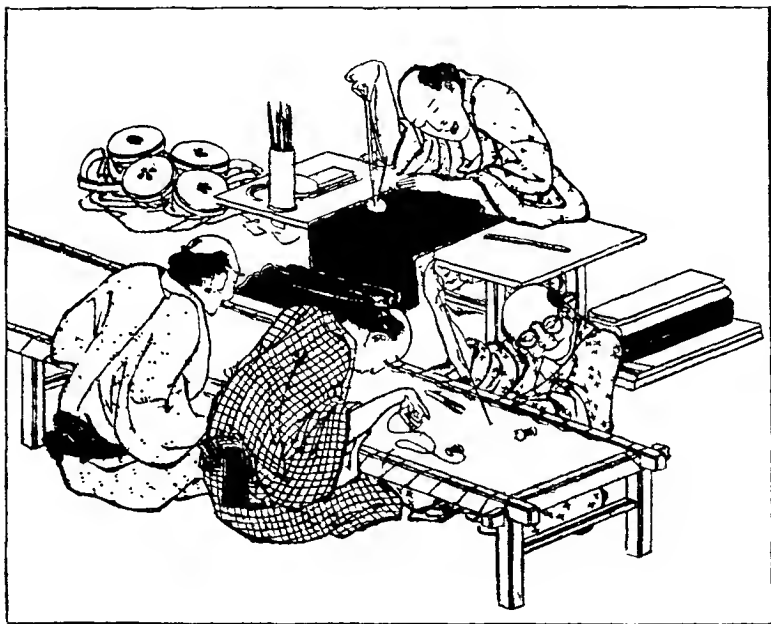
The Japanese have been termed by one who has, I believe, studied their Art more closely than any other western, “the greatest decorators in the world,” and they have certainly warranted this laudation in textiles. Every specimen encountered, even in these days of decadence amongst the cheaper products, arrests attention by some novelty of treatment or design, introduced not for the



VIEW OF NAGAKUBO. By Ichunsa Hinohegi.



purpose of attraction but with real Art motives. Whence is this derived? Much, the greater part in fact, comes from an inexhaustible source—Nature. Our workers have not yet grasped the fact that nothing in nature down to the humblest blade of grass may not be enlisted in their service—for the most part they are content to rely on a limited *répertoire*, and allow themselves to be hidebound by convention. If proof be needed we may ask who

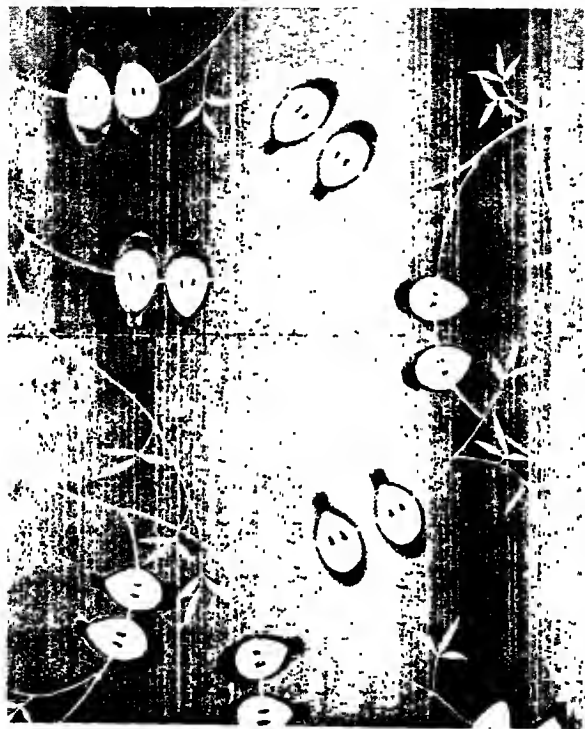


No. 213.—Embroiderers. *After Hokusai.*

before the Japanese thought of utilising the marks of a bird's feet in snow, the ripple marks of waves on sand, the trunks of trees (lopped of their boughs) thrown diagonally across the surface and traversed by slender twigs, the under-side of birds on boughs (No. 214), a bamboo fence (No. 215), lobsters in running water or a medley of fans and parasols? But the Japanese have no less than 400 designs of this nature bearing names known to every worker.



This inventive faculty has been accompanied by an infinity of painstaking, another name for genius. Some years ago there came to Europe some thousands of stencil plates that had been used for printing on crape. They were for some reason dumped down on this market and could be purchased for a song. I selected some hundred



No. 214.—Design for Yuzen Dyeing. *Takayama Yosokichi.*

or so for less than a sovereign and the late Mr Tuer, recognising their merits, published a book of reproductions of them, which had a considerable vogue, and which had increased value in the eyes of purchasers because an original stencil was inserted in each. The time, labour, and skill that had been bestowed upon these was almost

incredible, for each one was cut by hand with a knife. I give a very reduced reproduction of one and a small portion of the same the exact size (Nos. 217 and 216).

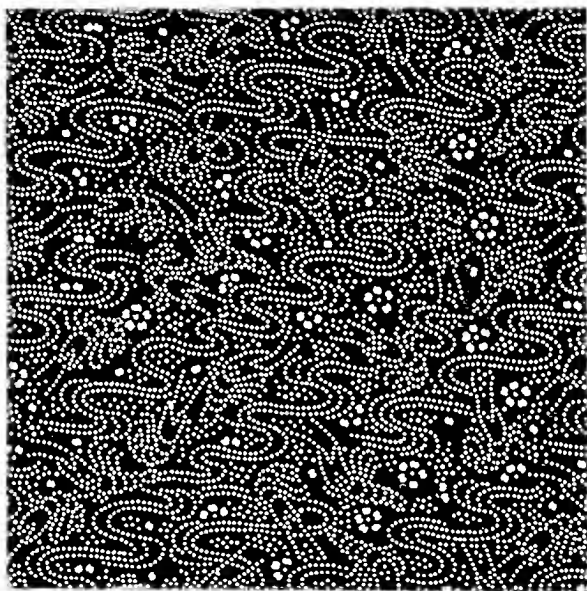
Japan undoubtedly benefited by having a neighbour and a rival in this department whom it was very hard



No. 215.—Bamboo Design for Yuzen Dyeing. *By Iwasaki Shuun.*

to equal and almost impossible to beat, and consequently we find her borrowing all that is good from China, a nation that in the past eclipsed in excellency, whether of colouring, design, or make, every other race, the Persians, perhaps, only excepted. It is no surprise, there-

fore, to learn that from the period of the earliest trade between the two empires Japan produced works which would have been deemed extraordinary had they been placed alongside those of any other nation of a similar era. The names of workers in brocade so long ago as the sixth century are handed down, specimens of this date being preserved in the Shosoin or Imperial Treasury at Nara. The imperial favour was extended to the industry, and in



No. 216.—Portion of Stencil Plate, natural size. (*Author's Collection.*)

the early years of the eighth century we read of the Empress Gwammyō (708-15) sending master weavers (*chōbunshi*) into the twenty-one provinces of the empire to teach the industry. No. 212 from the Imperial Collection, which is of this date, is also of interest as showing a representation of a harpy, a creature unknown in Japan save through extraneous illustrations. Even at this remote period there existed many methods in a remarkably

advanced condition, *e.g.*, in dyeing, where *rōkēchi* (laying of patterns by wax), *kōkēchi* (dyeing in the skein), and *kyōkēchi* (dyeing by open-work boards), and in weaving, where *tsuzurē*, a kind of Gobelin, was practised.

Space will not permit us to follow the fortunes of the industry down through the centuries—its decline during the civil wars, its encouragement under Hidéyoshi in the seventeenth century when the Japanese vied with one another in their extravagant habits, and acquired at no matter what cost the finest products of India, Persia, Turkey, and Europe, which they procured through Portuguese and Dutch traders. In every class luxury was



No. 217.—Stencil Plate, No. 216, reduced. (*Author's Collection.*)

rampant, the condition of the country in the Genroku period (1688-1703) resembling that of France during the reign of Louis XIV. and his successors.

Many causes contributed to this—one of the most important being the ceremonials attached to every walk in life. At Court the costume of the multitude of officials differed in material, colour, and ornament according to the rank of each, whilst even the curtains and hangings were changed for every ceremony. So too, not only in the Buddhist but the Shintō worship, the shrines were decked in frequent changes of attire, whilst every kind of costly fabric was brought into the service of the annual processions held by the latter. The Buddhist priests, being



No. 218.—“After Sundown,” Cut Velvet. *Designed by R. Tanaka.*

largely drawn from princes and nobles, paid fabulous prices for their sacerdotal equipment, especially the scarf (*ké'sa*). The high personages who took part in the *Ar* performances also lavished their money on costumes, designing them themselves for manufacture at Nishijin.

The military not to be outdone ornamented their helmets, their armour, their surcoats (*jinbaori*), and their nether garments (*hitatare*). Mention must also be made of the dresses worn in the *chanoyu*, which were woven to designs, texture, and colour dictated by professors, patterns which bear their names to the present day. Even the commoners were not behindhand, and for ceremonials they had full, intermediate, and informal dress, and marriages of whatever rank, being one of the greatest events in life, demanded an unusual outlay in elaborate vesture.

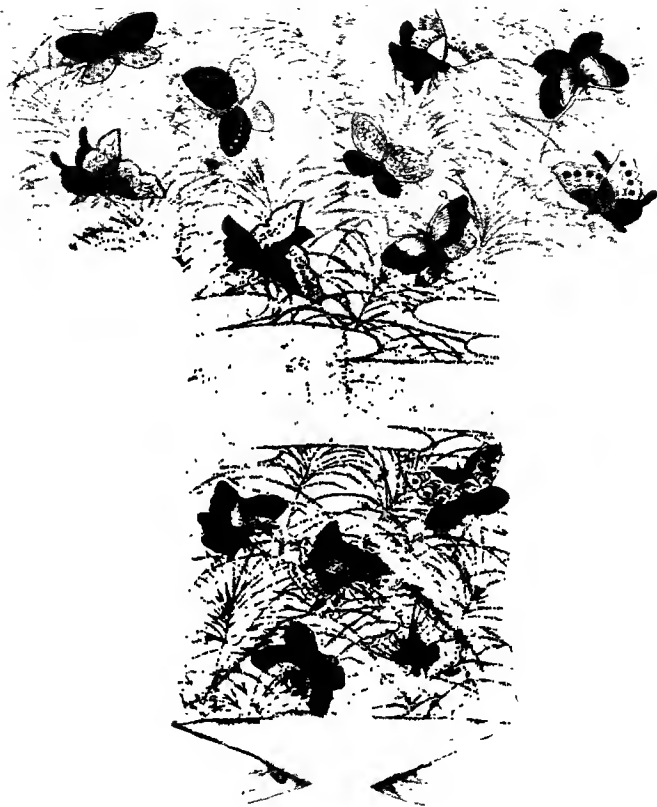
Lastly came the actors, the geisha, and the *demi-monde*, of whom the two last eclipsed every one in gorgeousness, and even set the fashions to those in higher ranks. Their sashes (*obi*) alone made enormous demands on the weaver's skill.

One has only to turn to the paintings and the colour



No. 219.—Design for Yuzen (Silk Crape).  
By Takahashi Shotaro.

prints of the period for proof of all this. The Government, when too late, saw the baneful crop that they had sown, and issued again and again sumptuary regulations to stay the evil, but these were unavailing, for fashion found means of avoidance, as, for instance, by the substitution of



No. 220.—Embroidered Robe.

cotton for silk, which the cleverness of the craftsmen enabled them to transform into the semblance of the latter.

The subject of brocades and embroideries, both ancient and modern, has received but little attention at the hands

of foreigners, *i.e.*, those unconnected with the craft. Doubtless this arises from the difficulty of obtaining specimen pieces,<sup>1</sup> or short lengths of the finer productions. Manufacturers cannot be expected to mutilate what may have occupied their most skilful weavers and assistants several years in the making, and those who deal in such things outside the country would hardly care to acquire whole pieces until they have a clientele sufficient to take the whole length if cut up. But it must be worth while to make the effort, especially if the support of museums in the producing



No. 221.—Embroidered Screen. *By Tanaka Rishichi.*

centres could be enlisted. A further reason that militated until recently against the introduction of Japanese fabrics was their narrow width as compared with that of foreign looms, but it is now the boast of Kyōto that it can turn out stuffs exceeding the European width.

<sup>1</sup> About the same time as the stencil plates above referred to there arrived in this country numbers of old sample pattern books containing small squares of brocade of every sort of design, many of them of no recent date. They appeared to me of such value that I took upon myself to urge their acquisition by the museums in the British centres of this industry, but unfortunately only with scant success.



Mr Wilson Crewdson, late chairman of the Japan Society, is one of the few in this country who have seen the value of such an endeavour, and he has given his opinions thereon in a paper in the *Studio*, vol. li. p. 40, from which I have taken information as to present-day fabrics, as also from an article in "Fifty Years of New Japan," vol. i. p. 550, by Kawashima Jimbēi, artist to the imperial household.

The weaving industry in Japan, unlike its counterpart in western countries, would seem to have been general and



No. 222.—Chin : Silk Embroidery. Designer, *Nishimura Sobei*.

not localised, and to have been practised in homes and village communities throughout the length and breadth of the land. This, combined with the difficulties of inter-communication, resulted in the past in an individuality and variety which is not met with in the products of European looms. Unfortunately this may not be so marked in the future, as much of the material was made under the patronage of, and to supply the wants of the territorial lords, whose local supremacy is now largely a thing of the past.

The looms upon which even the most elaborate brocades are now made have varied little for centuries, and although naturally the latest western machines are now in use the results obtained do not surpass in excellence those made on the old primitives, thus showing how considerable a factor is artistic intelligence. Brocades, which if not the most individual, are certainly the most sumptuous of the manufactures, have long been *par excellence* the birthright of the ancient city of Kyōto, where at Nishijin the craft has been practised for centuries, and where many different kinds were invented or perfected, such as *yamato nishiki*, *ito nishiki*, *araori nishiki*, *kinran*, *tsuzuké-no nishiki*, *rinzu* (satin), and *donsu* (silk damask).

A product that surprised foreign countries a few years ago was the cut velvet in which copies of paintings and scenes from nature were produced with marvellous, if sometimes garish, accuracy. It is accomplished by the fine wires on which the silk is woven being removed without the fabric being cut except in places where necessary to improve the effect, the picture or design being painted on the fabric in vari-coloured dyes (see No. 218).

Dyeing was brought to its perfection by Yūzén in the era of Kwanyei (1624-1643). He invented a process that has since gone by his name, and in which twisted threads and shrinkage in a bath produce a surface which when printed on by a stencil and resist produce a crape-like appearance which is altogether individual. The cleverness with which the stencils and resists are used is remarkable (No. 219).

A name that for a century past has stood at the head of producers is that of Kamada Chobei. He and his descendants to the thirteenth generation have produced work both in imitation of old materials and of original design that have earned for the house a place in the history of the Art of Japan.

Amongst noted names of the early nineteenth century may be cited those of Amano Fusayoshi or Sakujuro (1818-1830), Ishida Koru (1818-1844), Fuji Shuyemon (1831), and Date Yasuke (1830-1843).

Western nations have of late years had their markets flooded with embroideries from the far East. Unfortunately in no branch has a commercial element so intruded, and it is pitiable to think of the miserable dole that the embroiderers of some of these productions, oftentimes children, earn. I have elsewhere long ago<sup>1</sup> traced the number of intermediaries through whose hands one of the screens which are now procurable for shillings passes after it leaves the original decorator, and the profits of each, and reckoned what is left for him with whom we are most concerned, and how, for a certainty, his artistic instinct must soon be sweated out of him. But fortunately there is still a market for fine things, and it is for the encouragement of these that International Exhibitions are, after all, of so much use.

Weaving in the Méiji era received protection and encouragement from the authorities, who obtained a very satisfactory return, for there is now no town of any size where looms are not in full operation, manufacturing from silk produced from worms reared on their own mulberry trees. Both exhibitions and commercial museums at home enable the craftsmen to compare their work with that of others abroad and keep abreast of the progress of the industry. So too with dyes: those formerly in use were prepared from the boiled juice of vegetables, fruits, and flowers. Now dyes are obtained from all over the world, and of every possible hue, one weaver's shop in Kyōto grading 4,000 varieties. Whether their permanency and artistic quality is bettered by this outside assistance is a matter of conjecture.

<sup>1</sup> *Nineteenth Century*, March 1888.

## CONCLUSION

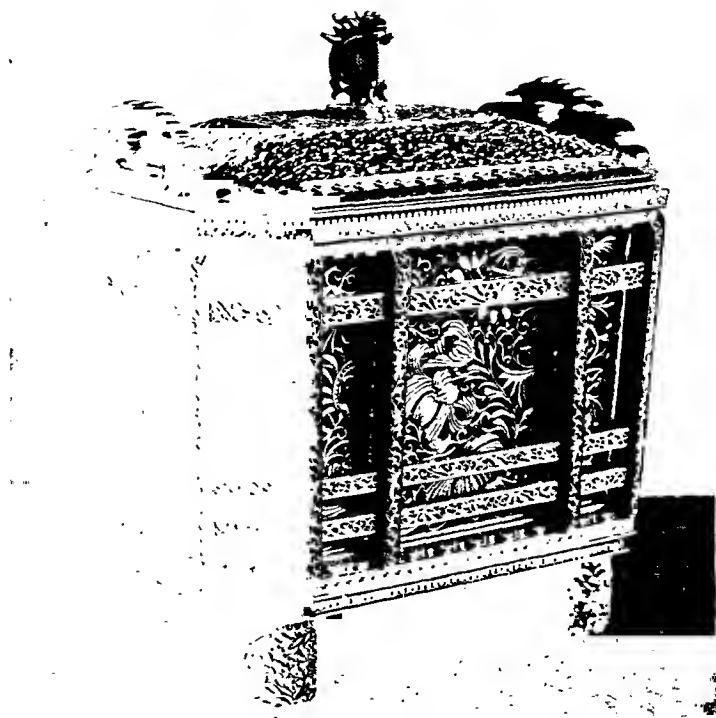
IN former editions I took leave of my subject with appeals, regrets, and prophecies—appeals to our fellow-craftsmen in the “great august country” of the East to hold fast to their old traditions, lest they should lose the high esteem in which their Art is held by the artists of the West—regrets that the museums and collectors of my own land had as yet failed to recognise an Art so individual, so instructive, and so meritorious—prophecies that the time could not be far distant when appreciation would come, and the Arts of Japan would take their proper place amongst those of the other nations of the earth.

Twenty years have passed, and how stands the situation to-day? In every respect practically the same.

The appeals to Japan do not now come only from humble individuals such as myself. As I write these lines the most influential journal in the world devotes its first leading article<sup>1</sup> to a consideration of the future of our ally, fearsome lest a nation, that in one leap has covered a distance that we took centuries to traverse, should suffer a transformation which will deprive its life of its former fragrance and simplicity: being certain that if material advancement has been purchased at the price of spiritual decay, if the ancient virtues of the people are growing dim under the allurements of a glittering prosperity and a greedy race for wealth and ease, then the outlook is dark indeed. If this be so as regards every department of Japan's life in none is there so much need to walk warily in mapping out her future as in the Fine Arts, where, tempted by foreign demand, each succeeding year sees the standard of

<sup>1</sup> The *Times*, 30th August 1912.

excellence depreciating, as in cheaper and yet cheaper wares a thinner veneer of Art is wrung from the producer. It will doubtless be affirmed that an artistic instinct that has permeated the life and the brains of the workman for long centuries will not be easily eradicated no matter how



No. 223.—Carved Sandal and Box Wood Jewellery Case. *By Shinoda Kisaburo of Ōsaka. (Charles Holme Collection.)*

ill his lot may be, how low his pay,<sup>1</sup> or how interminable his hours, and that I am negating my fears for the future by allotting space to the products of to-day. This is not so.

<sup>1</sup> Wages in the best paid industry (lacquer) averaged in 1910 .590 of a yen, or 1s. 3d. a day.

I show by these that it is possible to maintain the achievements of the past. Altogether the nation is concerned not with the *chefs d'œuvre* of the few, but with the Art of the whole race, and this it is that is being sapped by causes which are not peculiar to Japan. Chief amongst these is the shaking of the old faiths to their foundations, a peril which threatens not Japan alone, but the whole world.

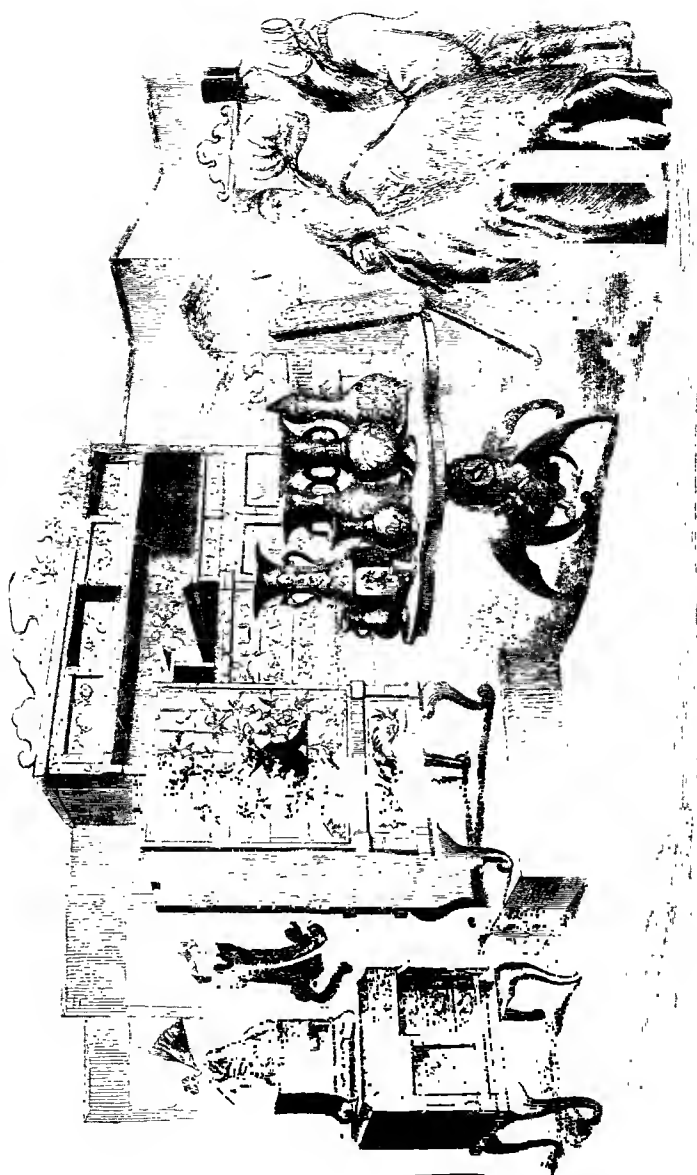
In regard to the second point, namely, my regrets. As this book will, I believe, have as many readers outside the confines of this country as within it, any extended survey of what British authorities are doing in regard to making our museums as complete storehouses of Japanese Art as of that of other nations of equal standing is out of place. I will therefore only say that the condition of affairs has of late years shown improvement. Thanks to the Salting bequest to the Victoria and Albert Museum (that exceptionally gifted connoisseur having been amongst the few of his kind to recognise the merits of Japanese Art), the representation of several branches of Art in that institution, where more than in any other it is most necessary, has materially improved. Both the Print Room at the British Museum and the Library at South Kensington have made large additions to what are now almost complete representations of Japanese chromo-xylographs, but in other directions a disposition still appears to exist to spread the funds over many second-rate articles rather than over a few of the first order, unmindful of the certainty that the first named may always be obtainable, the latter assuredly not. A quarter of a century ago I asked whether the authorities—if they intended to complete their collections by the purchase of old specimens—were wise in postponing indefinitely the time for so doing in the face of certain factors which I set out. Every one of those factors, each of which tended to lessen the chances of securing examples, has continued and will continue. It has now been proved that the supply never was as large as was imagined, and that the considerable quantity of objects that came over in the early years of the Méiji was due to causes that may never recur; this has

more recently been evidenced by the fact that the stress of the war with Russia brought no new vendors into the market. It is certain that the supply is yearly becoming less, especially as, with the rapidly increasing number of Japanese who are attaining to affluence, collectors there are coming into prominence. This being so it is little wonder that prices have continued to rise all along the line, and that objects that were procurable a quarter of a century ago are either not so now or only at much enhanced prices.

Thus far then my predictions have been justified, and so I fear have others then made, namely that if we were to keep pace with other nations in maintaining and increasing our trade with Japan we must lay ourselves out to become acquainted with the manners and customs of the country, its language, and its requirements. I showed that in Japan as elsewhere, the Germans, for instance, were doing their utmost to supplant us, and that whilst our imports thither were decreasing, theirs were augmenting by leaps and bounds. Here are some pertinent facts. In 1897 the British and German imports were as follows: From Great Britain, 65 million yen; from Germany, 18 million yen. In 1910, the latest year available, they were: Great Britain, 94 million yen; Germany, 44 million yen.

I showed that to assist the Germans not only were State and Provincial Museums and authorities doing their utmost, but that an Oriental College had been opened in Berlin at which a large number of students had matriculated, and a Japanese professor engaged who did not confine himself to abstruse questions of dialect, but devoted himself to the tuition of what would enable the student to go to Japan and be understood of the people.

Twenty years have passed since the urgency of assistance to maintain British supremacy in trade with Japan was impressed upon the powers that be. In the interval the country has entered into an Alliance with Japan which after an interval has been renewed. But has anything been done to benefit the commerce between the two countries? As regards the Art of War, we do send out some



No. 224.—The first Japanese Exhibition in London, 1854.



dozen officers (four a year, I believe) to learn the language, a tiny band that, it is said, will shortly be reduced, but as regards the Arts of Peace, nothing has been done. It is averred, and I believe with truth, that there is no one at the Board of Trade who can even translate a Japanese document without assistance from outside.

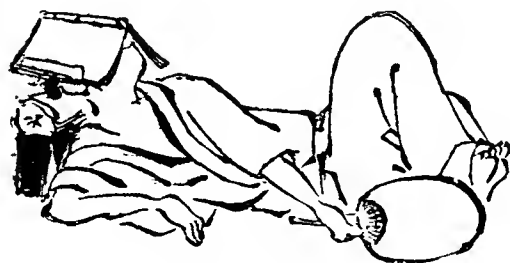
The Japan Society has just been celebrating its majority and it is considered that in enlisting over a thousand members it has done remarkably well, but at the recent Japan-British Exhibition it spent a considerable sum to advertise its aims, which are admirable, but hardly a single additional member was enlisted by its efforts. It holds exhibitions: a most notable one was that at the Galleries of the Royal Water Colour Society, Pall Mall East, where curiously enough the first exhibition of Japanese Art in London had been previously held in 1854<sup>1</sup> (No. 224), but although His Majesty, the late King, honoured it with his presence, so few of the outside public interested themselves in it, that it has not been deemed worth while to continue what was to be the first of a series.

I have said that many causes have tended to increase the rarity and the value of Japanese works of Art, but this has not been due to any increased appreciation in this country. Collectors here are still a mere handful, the dealers are fewer than ever in number, and in the auction rooms Japanese wares are still treated as of no account. This is extraordinary in view of the fact that this apathy exists with us alone. Whilst the pursuit of bric-à-brac collecting is more and more indulged in by all classes of society, whilst the curio shops are ransacked in the vain

<sup>1</sup> The articles had been brought by a Dutch merchant in the one Dutch ship that was then allowed to trade annually with Japan. The cabinets were described as being "Japanned on wood very like our papier maché," and the two largest bronze vases on the table were said to have been purchased for the Museum of Practical Art at Marlborough House, so probably they are now to be found in the Victoria and Albert Museum.

hope of finding some genuine article amongst a mass of falsities, that of Japanese Art is left severely alone, although as I have shown it is assuredly full of fascination, and I believe of profit, to those who undertake it.

If this book does no more than introduce to a new generation a most worthy Art, and one as exceptionally interesting in its surroundings as it is abounding in merit, the labour expended on presenting a new edition will have been amply repaid.



No. 225.—Finis.



# INDEX

The pronunciation of Japanese letters is shortly as follows: *a* as in father, *e* as in prey, *i* as in machine; *o* as in no, where a horizontal line is over *o* or *u* the sound is prolonged, *u* as in rule, *f* as fu softly, *n* at the end of a word often as ng, in the middle when followed by syllable beginning with b, m, or p, as in, no pure Japanese word begins with p, *s* is always sibilant as in sip, *sei* is like sigh, *sei* as sayee. *Nigori* is the impure or soft sound of a consonant, expressed in Japanese by two dots or a circle; *chi* or *shi* becomes *ji*, *ho*, *bo*, and *po*, *tsu*, *dzu*, *su*, *zu*, *ku*, *gu*, etc. Japanese words do not take the *s* in the plural. thus *Inrō* a seal box, *Inrō* seal boxes.

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